A HISTORY

OF THE

MOST INTERESTING EVENTS

IN

HE RISE AND PROGRESS

OF

METHODISM,

IN

EUROPE AND AMERICA

COMPILED BY

REV JAMES YOUNGS, A.M.

I shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.— Dan. xii. 4.

SECOND EDITION.

WITH ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

NEW HAVEN:

PUBLISHED BY DANIEL McLEOD.

PRINTED BY HEZEKIAH HOWE.

1831.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1831, by Dan-
L McLeod, in the Clerk's office, of the District Court of Connecticut

DEDICATION.

To the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and members of the several annual Conferences.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN.—The following work is dedicated to you, in consideration, that you are the honored successors, of Mr. Wesley and his compeers, spreading SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS among men, and evangelizing the world by the itinerant system, which those holy men, providentially commenced, and you, under God, are successfully carrying forward. May the Great Head of the Church, and Shepherd and Bishop of souls, guide you in your councils, support you in your labors, and crown them with abundant success, and fill the world with his Salvation, and bring us all to "glory and immortality."

With Christian affection,

Your brother in Christ.

THE COMPILER.

New Haven, July 1, 1830.

PREFACE.

THE history of the rise and progress of Methodism, is scattered through many volumes, which are written, mostly, on other subjects, and only introduce this history accidentally or in detached parts. This circumstance makes many books necessary to obtain a regular history of Methodism, and it requires much time, when books are at hand, to find some particular circumstance, to which we wish to refer: some have not all the books to obtain a thorough knowledge of this history, others, if they had the books, have not time to do it; therefore many, even of the members of the church to this day, know but little of the history of our church. Many have desired to see a regular concise history of Methodism, at least of the most important events in its history. The present work is designed to meet this desire, and to give every one an opportunity, with little expense of money or time, to acquire a correct knowledge of the most important facts in the history of Methodism.

In compiling this work I have gleaned matter from the approved authors, and standard works of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I have preserved chronological order, as far as circumstances would permit. There is but little variation from chronological order, with this exception; to prevent confusion, I have followed the history in Europe to the death of Mr. Wesley, before I commenced it in America, though Methodism commenced in this country before that period. I have found the work of compiling more difficult than I expected. It is no easy matter to select from

a number of authors, and preserve the thread of history, in chronological order, unbroken, without some chasm or repetition; from these I have endeavored to keep this work as free as possible. With the exception of the principal part of the first chapter, and a few sentences, this work is all extracted from our most approved authors. To save time, labor and paper, I thought it best to make this general acknowledgment once for all.

THE COMPILER.

New Haven, July 1, 1830.

TO SUBSCRIBERS.

THE first Edition of this work met with such success and approbation, as to warrant a second edition. No expense or time, has been spared in rendering the present edition satisfactory to the public, and it is believed that not only the valuable additions and alterations of the work, but its cheapness and accuracy of execution, will commend it to the public.

The publisher offers it as one of the cheapest and most valuable works.

New Haven, Sept. 1831.

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BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL EPITOME.

In the early history of the human family, God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually, Gen. vi, 5. For all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth, Gen. vi, 12. The volume of inspiration constantly portrays the character of man, in perfect accordance with this solemn declaration of the Almighty, and profane history and sad experience demonstrate, that the picture is not drawn with too high colors. But God, "whose tender mercies *are* over all his works," Psalm cxlv, 9; and who hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, Ezek. xviii, 32; having made rich and ample provision for the salvation of sinful and erring man, at different times, and under various dispensations, raised up men divinely inspired, or endued with an uncommon degree of piety, zeal and perseverance in the cause of their Heavenly Master, who with undaunted courage, unabating zeal, and untiring perseverance, stemmed the desolating torrent of ungodliness, and called their fellow men from sin's destructive ways, to the pure truth of God, to drink of those flowing streams which gladden the city of God. Such were the prophets under the old covenant, the Apostles under the new, and others, in more modern times, who, regardless of the frowns of the world on the one hand, or its flatteries on the other, took their position as on Sinai's smoking, quaking summit, and seemingly flashed its lightnings on their auditories, and peal-

ed its terrific thunders upon their guilty souls, while they emphatically exclaimed, cursed *be* he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them, Deut. xxvii, 26, Gal. iii, 10.—He that believeth not shall be damned, Mark xvi, 16.—For by the law is the knowledge of sin, Rom. iii, 20. Then, as on mount Sion or Calvary, with the charming sound of the gospel trump, they cried, Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and *there is* none else, Isa. xlv, 22. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, John i, 29. Sanctify yourselves therefore and be ye holy: for I *am* the Lord your God, Lev. xx, 7. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect, Matt. v, 48. Be ye holy; for I am holy, 1 Pet. i, 16. When the man of sin, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, 2 Thess. ii, 3, 4, had driven pure and undefiled religion from the church, and buried what remained under the rubbish of a new coined idolatry, and delusive pageantry: then God called forth a Luther, a Melancthon and an Arminius, with their coadjutors, to expose the corruptions of a mercenary priesthood, and cleanse the sanctuary from worse than useless lumber, and direct sinful mortals to the truth of God, as the only rule of faith, and to Jesus the only Mediator and Savior, for mercy, pardon and salvation. Their labors were crowned with great success, which the reformation in the sixteenth century abundantly proves. Experimental religion, practical piety and scriptural holiness were little known in England; and infidelity was making rapid strides in the nation, when the Wesleys and their associates began to discover an uncommon spirit of inquiry, piety and devotion, which procured them the name of the "holy club," and afterwards, "Methodists."

"It is come," says Bishop Butler, "I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that christianity is

not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreement among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

There is every reason to believe, that the Methodists were the instruments of stemming this torrent. Buck's Theological Dictionary, under the word Methodists.

CHAPTER II.

From the birth of Mr. John Wesley, to the time he entered Christ's Church College, Oxford, 1720—a period of seventeen years.

Mr. John Wesley was the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, and born at Epworth in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June, 1703, O. S. There has indeed been some variation in the accounts given of his age by different persons of the family; but the certificate of it, sent him by his father a little before he was ordained priest, to satisfy the Bishop concerning his age, puts the matter beyond a doubt.

"Epworth, August 23, 1728.

"John Wesley, M. A. Fellow of Lincoln College, was twenty five years old the 17th of June last, having been baptized a few hours after his birth by me.

"Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth."

When he was nearly six years old, a calamity happened which threatened him, and indeed the whole family, with destruction. By accident, as all who have written concerning it have supposed; but according to his own account, by the

wickedness of some of his father's parishioners, who could not bear the plain dealing of so faithful and resolute a pastor, the parsonage house was set on fire.

The following anecdote related to me by Mr. John Wesley, will throw some light upon this event. Many of his father's parishioners gave much trouble about the tithes. At one time they would only pay *in kind*. Going into a field, upon one of those occasions, where the tithe corn was laid out, Mr. Wesley found a farmer very deliberately at work with a pair of shears, cutting off the ears of corn and putting them into a bag which he had brought with him for that purpose. Mr. Wesley said not any thing to him, but took him by the arm and walked with him into the town. When they got into the market place, Mr. Wesley seized the bag, and, turning it inside out before all the people, told them what the farmer had been doing. He then left him, with his pilfered spoils, to the judgment of his neighbors, and walked quietly home.

A letter from Mrs. Susannah Wesley to the Rev. Mr. Hoole, gives the best account of this calamitous fire. It is dated August 24, 1709.

"*Rev. Sir*,—My master is much concerned that he was so unhappy as to miss of seeing you at Epworth; and he is not a little troubled that the great hurry of business, about building his house, will not afford him leisure to write. He has therefore ordered me to satisfy your desire as well as I can, which I shall do by a simple relation of matters of fact, though I cannot at this distance of time recollect every calamitous circumstance that attended our strange reverse of fortune. On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, our house took fire; by what accident God only knows. It was discovered by some sparks falling from the roof upon the bed, where one of the children (Hetty) lay, and burning her feet, she immediately ran to our chamber and called us; but I

believe no one heard her; for Mr. Wesley was alarmed by a cry of FIRE in the street, upon which he rose, little imagining that his own house was on fire; but on opening his door, he found it was full of smoke, and the roof was already burnt through. He immediately came to my room, (as I was very ill, he lay in a separate room from me,) and bid me and my two eldest daughters to rise quickly and shift for our lives, the house being all on fire. Then he ran and burst open the nursery door, and called to the maid to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in bed with her; the three others in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bid the rest follow, which they did, except Jackey. When we were got into the hall, and saw ourselves surrounded with flames, and that the roof was on the point of falling we concluded ourselves inevitably lost; as Mr. Wesley in his fright forgot the keys of the doors above stairs. But he ventured up stairs once more, and recovered them, a minute before the staircase took fire. When we opened the street door, the strong north-east wind drove the flames in with such violence, that none could stand against them: Mr. Wesley only, had such presence of mind as to think of the garden door, out of which he helped some of the children; the rest got through the windows. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows; nor could I get to the garden door. I endeavored three times to force my passage through the street door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Savior to preserve me, if it were his will, from that death; and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no further harm than a little scorching [of] my hands and face.

"While Mr. Wesley was carrying the children into the garden, he heard the child in the nursery cry out miserably for help, which extremely affected him; but his affliction was much increased, when he had several times attempted

the stairs then on fire, and found that they would not bear his weight. Finding it was impossible to get near him, he gave him up for lost, and kneeling down, he commended his soul to God, and left him, as he thought, perishing in the flames. But the boy seeing none come to his help, and being frightened, the chamber and bed being on fire, he climbed up the casement, where he was soon perceived by the men in the yard, who immediately got up and pulled him out, just in the article of time that the roof fell in, and beat the chamber to the ground. Thus by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, our lives were all preserved by little less than a miracle; for there passed but a few minutes between the first alarm of fire, and the falling of the house."

Mr. John Wesley's account of what happened to himself, varies a little from this relation given by his mother. "I believe," says he, "it was just at that time (when they thought they heard him cry) I waked: for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterward. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed upon a chest which stood near the window: one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, "there will not be time: but I have thought of another expedient. Here I will fix myself against the wall: lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders." They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the roof fell; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, "come neighbors! let us kneel down! let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children; let the house go, I am rich enough!"

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REMARKABLE PRESERVATION

of Mr. Wesley when a child, at Epworth (Eng.) February 9th 1709

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MR. WESLEY

conversing with an Indian Chief, in Georgia in 1736.

"The next day as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his Polyglott Bible, on which just these words were legible: Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me. Go: sell all that thou hast: and take up the cross, and follow me."

The memory of Mr. John Wesley's escape is preserved in one of his early prints. Under his portrait there is a house in flames, with this inscription: "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?" He remembered this event ever after with the most lively gratitude, and more than once has introduced it in his writings.

The peculiar danger and wonderful escape of this child, excited a good deal of attention and inquiry at the time, especially among the friends and relations of the family. His brother Samuel, being then at Westminster, writes to his mother on this occasion in the following words, complaining that they did not inform him of the particulars. "I have not heard a word from the country since the first letter you sent me after the fire. I am quite ashamed to go to any of my relations. They ask me, 'whether my father means to leave Epworth? whether he is building his house? whether he has lost all his books and papers? if nothing was saved? what was the lost child? a boy or a girl? what was its name?' &c. To all which I am forced to answer, I cannot tell; I do not know; I have not heard—I have asked my father some of these questions, but am still an ignoramus."

All the children received the first rudiments of learning from their mother, who was admirably qualified for this office in her own family. There is no evidence that the boys were ever put to any school in the country, their mother having a very bad opinion of the common methods of instruction and governing children. But she was not only attentive to their progress in learning, she likewise endeavor-

ed to give them, as early as possible, just and useful notions of religion. Her mind seems to have been led to a more than ordinary attention to her son John in this respect. In one of her private meditations, when he was near eight years old, she mentions him, in a manner that shows how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. I shall transcribe the whole meditation for the benefit of the reader.

"*Evening*, *May* 17, 1711."

"*Son John*,—What shall I render to the Lord for his mercies? The little unworthy praise that I can offer, is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice.

"I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me; and I would resolve, (O give me grace to do it,) that the residue of my life shall be devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for, than I have ever been; that I may do my endeavor to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success." Her good endeavors were not without the desired effect.

Though Mrs. Wesley allotted two hours in the day for meditation and prayer in private, no woman was ever more diligent in business, or attentive to family affairs, than she was. Remarkable for method and good arrangement both in her studies and business, she saved much time, and kept her mind free from perplexity. She had nineteen children, ten of whom, at least, grew up to be educated; and this duty fell upon her; and it was almost impossible for the children to have had a better instructor. Her method of teaching them to read was, I think, peculiar to herself, and deserves to be noticed. I shall give it in her own words, in a letter to Mr. John Wesley.

"None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years in learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: The day before a child began to learn, the house was in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should enter the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters; and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought them very dull: But the reason why I thought them so was, because the rest learned them so readily, and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the 10th of February; the next day he began to learn, and as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over till he could read it off hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, &c., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory, that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learned in his lesson, he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learnt very soon to read an English author well.

"The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters, they were first put to spell, and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson; were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading during school time without any intermission; and before we left school, each child read what he had learnt

that morning; and ere we parted, in the afternoon, what he had learned that day."

In the month of April, 1712, John had the small-pox, together with four other of the children. His father was then in London, to whom his mother writes thus: "Jack has borne his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without any complaint; though he seemed angry at the small-pox when they were sore, as we guessed by his looking sourly at them, for he never said any thing." In 1714, he was placed at the Charter-house, with that eminent scholar, Dr. Walker, the Head Master, and became a favorite on account of his sobriety and application. Ever after, he retained a remarkable predilection for that place, and was accustomed to walk through it once or twice a year during his annual visit to London. He had some reasons however to complain of the usage he received at the Charter House. Discipline was so exceedingly relaxed, that the boys of the higher forms were suffered to eat up, not only their own portions of animal food, but those also which were allowed to the lesser boys. By this means he was limited for a considerable part of the time he remained at that school, to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. One thing he observed, which contributed among others to his general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution,—and that was, his invariable attention to a strict command of his father, that he should run round the Charter House garden, which was of considerable extent three times every morning.

In 1719, when his father was hesitating in what situation he should place Charles, his brother Samuel writes thus concerning John: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar." Two or three months afterward he mentions him again, in a letter to his father: "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

He was now sixteen, and the next year was elected to Christ Church, Oxford. Here he pursued his studies with great advantage, I believe under the direction of Dr. Wigan, a gentleman eminent for his classical knowledge. Mr. Wesley's natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humor. When he was about twenty-one years of age, "he appeared" as Mr. Badcock has observed, "the very sensible and acute collegian—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments."* His perfect knowledge of the classics gave a smooth polish to all his compositions. He had already begun to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, though most of his poetical pieces of this period, were, I believe, either imitations or translations of the Latin. Some time in this year, however, he wrote an imitation of the 65th Psalm, which he sent to his father, who says, "I like your verses on the 65th Psalm, and would not have you bury your talent."

CHAPTER III.

From his entrance in College, 1720, to his leaving England for America, Oct. 14th, 1735—a period of fifteen years.

Mr. Crowther, in the Portraiture of Methodism, after giving an account of Mr. Wesley's paternal and maternal relatives, observes: "When we survey Mr. John Wesley rising into public notice, and having sprung from such a venerable stock of ancestors, both on the side of his father and his mother, and surrounded with such respectable brothers and sisters, we feel our minds prepared for something great and good, beyond what is common: and when we proceed

* Westminster Magazine.

to remark his education, and his religious instruction particularly, we shall see the best foundation laid for useful knowledge, and genuine Christianity."

He was educated for the church: and in 1720, he entered a student at Christ Church College, in Oxford, and not long after, took his degree of Bachelor of Arts.

He soon became very thoughtful and pious. This was considerably promoted by reading Bishop Taylor's Rules and Exercises of Holy Living, and Mr. Law's Serious Call to a holy Life. His example and advice, under God, induced his brother Charles, who was also at College, to become pious. They gave great attention to reading books of devotion, prayed much and fervently, and received the Lord's Supper every week. Others imbibed the same spirit, and associated with them for the purpose of piety. They regulated their time and employments by certain rules, which accidentally got them the nickname of Methodist. And as the disciples of Christ were first called Christians in Antioch, so John Wesley and his followers, were first called Methodists at the University of Oxford.

It is well worthy of attention, that this name of Methodist, which was originally given in derision, has since been contended for by the Arminians and Calvinists, as being peculiarly honorable; while others have gone as far as conscience would permit, and perhaps sometimes a little farther, to escape what they deemed an odious appellation.

The founders of the Methodists were students at the University of Oxford, and were first called the *Sacramentarians*, then the *Godly Club*, and finally *Methodist*. A Fellow of Merton College, observing the regular method in which they divided their time between their devotions, their studies, their rest, &c. said, "Here is a new sect of Methodists sprung up;" alluding to an eminent College of Physicians at Rome, who were so called on account of putting their

patients under a peculiar regimen.* But it is not generally known, that the name of Methodist had been given long before the days of Mr. Wesley, to a religious party in England, which was distinguished by some of those marks which are supposed to characterize the present Methodist. This might have been known to the Fellow of Merton College, who gave the Oxonian Pietists the name of Methodists, though it seems probable Mr. Wesley never caught the idea.

Toward the close of this year, [1724,] Mr. Wesley began to think of entering into Deacon's Orders; and this led him to reflect on the importance of the ministerial office, the motives of entering into it, and the necessary qualifications for it. On examining the step he intended to take, through all its consequences, to himself and others, it appeared of the greatest magnitude, and made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became more serious than usual, and applied himself with more attention to the subject of divinity. Some doubts arising in his mind on the motives which ought to influence a man in taking Holy Orders, he proposed them to his father, with a frankness that does great credit to the integrity of his heart. His father's answer is dated the 26th of January, 1725. "As to what you mention of entering into Holy Orders, it is indeed a great work, and I am pleased to find you think it so." His mother wrote to him in February on the same subject, and seemed desirous that he should enter into Orders as soon as possible. "I think," says she, "the sooner you are a Deacon, the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which of all other studies, I humbly conceive to be the best for a candidate for orders."

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* See Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. 17th Cent. Sec. 2, p. 1.

He began now to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity, and became more desirous of entering into Orders. He wrote twice to his father on this subject. His father answered him in March, and informed him that he had changed his mind, and was then inclined that he should take Orders that summer; "But in the first place," says he, "if you love yourself or me, pray heartily."

The books, which at this time, had the greatest influence on his mind, were *the imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, and Bishop Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*. He did not indeed implicitly receive every thing they taught; but they roused his attention to the whole spirit of the Christian religion. "He began to see that true religion is seated in the heart, and that God's law extends to all our thoughts, as well as words and actions."* This was a singular feature in Mr. Wesley's character. Contrary to the dispositions of most young men who have been educated in the habits of study, he was diffident of his own judgment; and this disposition is visible through the whole of his life. On this occasion, he consulted his parents, stated his objection to some things in Kempis, and asked their opinion.

His mother's letter, in answer to this, is dated June the 8th, in which she says, "I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, who had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth or pleasure, as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture.† Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the pleasure, of the innocence, or malignity of action—take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short,

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* Wesley's Works, in 32 Volumes, Vol. XXVI, p. 274.

† This is tender, yea, awful ground. Kempis meant the mirth and pleasures of the world.

whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over our mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."

His father's letter is dated July 14. "As for Thomas à Kempis," says he, "all the world are apt to strain either on one side or the other; but for all that, mortification is still an indispensable Christian duty. The world is a Syren, and we must have a care of her; and if the '*young man*' will '*rejoice in his youth*,' yet let him take care that his joys be innocent; and in order to this, remember that '*for all these things God will bring him into judgment.*' I have only this to add of my friend and old companion, that, making some grains of allowance, he may be read to great advantage; nay, that it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously, without admiring, and I think in some measure imitating his heroic strains of humility, piety, and devotion."

Having now determined to devote himself wholly to God, his letters to his parents carried a savor of religion, which before they had wanted; this made his father say to him in a letter of August 2d, "if you be what you write, you and I shall be happy, and you will much alleviate my misfortune." He soon found that his son was not double minded. The time of his Ordination now drew near. His father wrote to him on this subject, in a letter, dated September 7, in which he says, "God fit you for your great work! Fast, watch, and pray; believe, love, endure, and be happy; towards which you shall never want the most ardent prayers of your affectionate father." In preparing for his Ordination, he found some scruples on his mind respecting the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed,* which he proposed to his father, who afterwards gave him his opinion upon it. Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for

* See his Sermon on the Trinity.

the ministerial office, he was ordained Deacon, on Sunday, the 11th of this month, by Dr. Potter, then Bishop of Oxford.

Mr. Wesley's Ordination supplied him an additional motive to prosecute the study of Divinity, which he did, by directing his inquiries into the evidences and reasonableness of the Christian Religion. But Mr. Wesley did not employ all his time in these studies. His private Diary shows how delighted he was in the study of the Classics, and other books in different branches of science, and in the performance of his academical exercises.

Mr. Wesley's uncommon seriousness, however, was against him; and he did not escape the banter and ridicule of his adversaries at Lincoln College, on this occasion. In reference to this, his father observes, in a letter of August, "As for the gentlemen Candidates you write of—does any body think that the devil has no agents left? It is a very callow virtue, sure, that cannot bear being laughed at. I think our Captain and Master endured something more for us, before he entered into glory; and unless we follow his steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with him. Nor shall any who sincerely endeavor to serve him, either by turning others to righteousness, or keeping them steadfast in it, lose their reward." And in his letter of October 19, he exhorts him to bear patiently what is said to him at Lincoln. "But be sure," says he, "never to return the like treatment to your enemy. You and I have hitherto done the best we could in that affair; do you continue to do the same, and rest the whole with providence."

His mother writes to him on this occasion more in the way of encouragement and caution. "If it be," says she, "a weak virtue that cannot bear being laughed at: I am sure it is a strong and well confirmed virtue that can bear the test of a brisk buffoonery. I doubt too many people, though well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and

good conscience, merely because they could not bear railery. Some young persons have a natural excess of bashfulness; others are so tender of what they call honor, that they cannot endure to be made a jest of. I would therefore advise those who are in the beginning of a Christian course, to shun the company of profane wits as they would the plague, and never to contract an intimacy with any, but such as have a good sense of religion."

But notwithstanding the warm opposition which his opponents made against him, Mr. Wesley's general good character for learning and diligence, gave such firmness and zeal to his friends, that on Thursday, March the 17th, 1726, he was elected fellow of Lincoln college.* His father very emphatically expresses his satisfaction on this occasion, in a letter of the first of April. "I have both yours, since your election; in both, you express yourself as becometh you. What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God knows; *sed passi graviora*—Whatever I am, my Jack is fellow of Lincoln." His mother, in a letter of March 30th, tells him, in her usual strain of piety, "I think myself obliged to return great thanks to Almighty God, for giving you good success at Lincoln. Let whoever He pleased be the instrument, to Him, and to Him alone, the glory appertains."

His parents now invited him to spend some time with them in the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and staid the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote. During this time he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's day, and in various ways assisted his father as occasion required. Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the university.

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* Private Diary.

Mr. Wesley was now more desirous than ever of improving his time to the best advantage. As he had not yet taken his degree of Master of Arts, the whole of his time was not at his own disposal; but those portions of it which were, he carefully spent in pursuit of such knowledge as promised to be beneficial to himself, and would enable him to benefit others. He never indulged himself in an idle useless curiosity, which is the common fault of most young men in the conduct of their studies.

Mr. Wesley received the degree of Master of Arts on the 14th* of February,† and acquired considerable reputation in his disputation for his degree; on which account his mother congratulates him in a letter of the fourteenth of March. On the nineteenth he writes thus to her: "One advantage, at least, my degree has given me; I am now at liberty, and shall be in a great measure for some time, to choose my own employment."

It has been before observed, that his father had two livings. He now became less able to attend to the duties of his station, than formerly. He was therefore desirous that his son, Mr. John Wesley, should come into the country, and reside chiefly at Wroote, as his curate. Mr. Wesley complied with his father's request. He continued in the country till July, 1728, when he returned by way of London, to Oxford, where he arrived on the 27th of this month, with a view to obtain Priest's Orders. No reason is assigned, why he was not ordained priest sooner: it is evident, however, that he had never applied for it, probably on account of his age. On Sunday, the 22d of September, he was ordained

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* Private Diary.

† He informed me that he delivered three lectures on that occasion—one on Natural Philosophy, *De Anima Brutorum;* another on Moral Philosophy, *De Julio Cæsare;* and a third on Religion, *De Amore Dei.* What a pity these should be lost! at least they are lost to me.

priest by Dr. Potter, bishop of Oxford, who had ordained him deacon in 1725.

We have seen Mr. John Wesley rising into notice and esteem on account of his literary talents, yet still in the humble situation of curate to his father, which he now quitted at the call of the chief men of his college. In consequence of that order, he entered upon a new situation. He obtained pupils, and became a tutor. He presided also in the hall as moderator in the disputations, which were held six times a week; and always regarded this last appointment as a very gracious providence: it gave him a complete knowledge of that important branch of learning, by which he was afterwards enabled during his whole life, to defend the truth against all opponents.

Mr. Wesley's own account of his religious views and impressions while at Oxford, is so worthy of observation that I give it without any alteration. "In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's 'Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.' In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected with that part in particular which relates to *purity of intention*. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God: all my thoughts, and words, and actions: being thoroughly convinced there was no medium: but that every part of my life (not some only,) must either be a sacrifice to God, or to myself, that is, in effect, to the devil. In the year 1726, I met with Kempis' 'Christian Pattern.' The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God, (supposing it possible to do this and go no farther,) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to him. I saw that 'simplicity of intention and purity of affection,' one design in all we speak or do, and one desire, ruling all our tempers, are indeed 'the wings of the soul,' without which we can never ascend to the mount of God.

"In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having the mind which was in Christ, and of walking as Christ also walked; even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him, and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things."

About this time a serious man, whom he had travelled many miles to see, said to him, "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember that you cannot serve him alone. You must therefore find companions, or make them; the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." He never forgot this. Therefore, on his return to the university, he first spoke to his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, and afterward to Mr. Morgan and others. When they first began to meet, they read Divinity on the Sunday evenings, and on other nights the Greek and Latin Classics. The summer following, they began to visit the prisoners in the castle, and the sick poor in the town.

Their meetings now began to be more directly religious: they read and considered the Greek Testament on the week evenings, and conversed closely and deeply on the things of God. They now likewise observed the fasts of the ancient church every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated once a week. "We are now," says Mr. Wesley, "about fifteen in number, '*all of one heart and one mind.*'"

"In November, 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ church; and Mr. Kirkham, of Merton college; began to spend some evenings in a week together, in reading chiefly the Greek Testament. The next year, two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them; and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils.

In the beginning of the year 1731, a meeting was held by several of the seniors of the college, to consult on the speediest way to stop the progress of *enthusiasm* in it. Mr. Wesley and his friends did not learn what was the result of this very pious consultation; but it was soon publicly reported, that Dr. ——— and the censors were going to blow up the *Godly Club*. This was now their common title; though they were sometimes dignified with that of the *Enthusiast*, or the *Reforming Club*. As new difficulties arose, Mr. Wesley lost no opportunity of consulting his friends. He now wrote to his brother Samuel at Westminster, whose answer is dated in April. "I designed," says he, "to have written by Mr. Bateman, to whom I read part of your last letter, concerning the execrable consultation, in order to stop the progress of religion, by giving it a false name. He lifted up his eyes and hands, and protested he could not have believed such a thing. He gave Mr. Morgan a very good character, and said he should always think himself obliged to him, for the pains he took in reclaiming a young pupil of his, who was just got into ill company, and upon the brink of destruction. I do not like your being called *a club;* that name is really calculated to do mischief. But the other charge of *enthusiasm*, can weigh with none, but such as drink away their senses, or never had any; for surely activity in social duties, and a strict attendance on the ordained means of grace, are the strongest guards imaginable against it. I called on Dr. Terry, to desire him to subscribe to *Job*, but did not meet with him at home. In two or three days, *O rem riduculam et jocosam!* he did me the favor to call upon me. I said, 'I hoped my two brothers have still good characters at Oxford.' He answered, he believed they were studious and sober. When he was got down stairs, he turned about, and said, 'I think I have heard your brothers are exemplary, and take great pains to instil good principles into young people,' I told him, and

you may guess I told him the truth; 'I was very glad to hear such a character of them, *especially from him.*'" From the last words, it is pretty plain, that Dr. Terry was an avowed opposer of Mr. Wesley and his friends, though he was constrained to bear testimony to the goodness of their characters: but whether he was the grave gentleman, who so piously took his nephew by the throat, to convert him to his own way of thinking and acting, and who consulted with the censors how to stop the progress of religion among them, is not certain.

His father, in a letter previously written, says, "I hear my son John has the honor of being styled the 'Father of the Holy Club:' if it be so, I am sure I must be the Grandfather of it; and I need not say, that I had rather any of my sons should be so dignified and distinguished, than to have the title of His Holiness."

On the 18th of April, Mr. Wesley, in company with his brother, set out on foot for Epworth, for they now saved every penny that they could, to give it to the poor. They returned to Oxford on the 12th of May.

They still pursued their design of doing as much good as possible, with the same diligence and zeal as before. Some of their friends, however, began to think that they carried matters too far, and laid unnecessary burdens on themselves. This subject Mr. Wesley mentions in a letter to his mother, giving her at the same time some account of the effects of their journey.

"The motion and sun together," says he, "in our last hundred and fifty miles' walk, so thoroughly carried off all our superfluous humors, that we continue perfectly in health, though it is here a very sickly season. And Mr. Kirkham assures us, on the word of a priest and a physician, that if we will but take the same medicine once or twice a year, that we shall never need any other to keep us from the gout. When we were with him, we touched two or three times

upon a nice subject, but did not come to any full conclusion. The point debated was, what is the meaning of being *righteous over much*, or by the more common phrase, of being too strict in religion? and what danger there was of any of us falling into that extreme?

"All the ways of being too righteous or too strict which we could think of, were these: either the carrying some one particular virtue to so great a height, as to make it clash with some other; or, the laying too much stress on the instituted means of grace, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law; or, the multiplying prudential means upon ourselves so far, and binding ourselves to the observance of them so strictly, as to obstruct the end we aimed at by them, either by hindering our advance in heavenly affections in general, or by retarding our progress in some particular virtue. Our opponents seemed to think my brother and I [were] in some danger of being too strict in this last sense; of laying burdens on ourselves too heavy to be borne, and consequently too heavy to be of any use to us."

"It is easy to observe, that almost every one thinks that rule totally needless, which he does not need himself; and as to the Christian spirit itself, almost every one calls that degree of it which he does not himself aim at, enthusiasm."

About this time their father came up to London, and from thence took an excursion to Oxford, to see what his sons were doing, and in what spirit and temper of mind they were. On his return to London, he wrote a few lines to Mrs. Wesley, Jan. 5th, in which he says: "I had yours on new-year's day, on which I returned in one day from Oxford, not very well; but well paid both for my expense and labor, by the shining piety of our two sons, of whom I shall write soon more at large." This gives the fullest evidence, that the father did not then think his sons were carrying matters too far.

In 1732, this pious company were joined by Mr. Benjamin Ingham, and soon after, Mr. James Hervey, and Mr. George Whitefield, were added to the number. These were all collegians, and must be considered as the *first Methodists.* But how greatly has this mustard-seed grown and spread! Mr. Wesley says, "in 1729, my brother and I reading the Bible, saw inward and outward holiness therein, followed after it, and incited others so to do."

As the persons united in the society at Oxford were all zealous members of the church of England, by the advice of Mr. Clayton, who now joined them, they added to their former practices, a regular observance of the fasts of the church; the general neglect of which, they thought, was by no means a sufficient excuse for neglecting them.

On the first of January, 1733, Mr. Wesley preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University, on "*The Circumcision of the Heart,*" Rom. ii, 29. In this discourse, which is printed in the second volume of his sermons, he explained with great clearness, and energy of language, his views of the Christian salvation to be attained in this life; from which he never varied in any material point, to the day of his death. He was, indeed, at this time almost wholly ignorant of the gospel method of *attaining* this salvation; but he sought it with his whole heart, according to the knowledge he then had, and was willing to sacrifice the dearest thing he possessed in the world for the attainment of it. The truth is, he was, like Saul of Tarsus, "*alive without the law.*" He was not yet "*slain by the commandment,*" and therefore did not come to God in his true character. He who "*justifieth* only *the ungodly,*" could not therefore justify him. The faith which he had at that time could not be *imputed to him for righteousness,* and hence he had not "*peace and joy in believing.*"

His father was now in a bad state of health, and seemed declining apace. On this account he set out on horseback

for Epworth, in the beginning of January. As he was passing over the bridge beyond Daventry, his horse fell over it with him; but he again escaped unhurt. For these interpositions of Providence, Mr. Wesley did not fail to give the tribute of praise and thanksgiving to his Divine deliverer.

The state of his father's health induced his parents to turn their thoughts to the means of obtaining the living of Epworth for him, in case of his father's demise. This was mentioned to him when he was with them, but he seems to have then but little attended to it. After his return to Oxford, in February, he wrote to his mother on the subject. "You observed," says he, "when I was with you, that I was very indifferent as to having or not having the living of Epworth. I was indeed utterly unable to determine either way; and that for this reason: I know, if I could stand my ground here, and approve myself a faithful minister of our blessed Jesus, by honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report; then there would not be a place under the heaven like this, for improvement in every good work. But whether I can stem the torrent which I saw then, but see now much more, rolling down from all sides upon me, that I know not. It is true, there is One who can yet either command the great water-flood that it shall not come nigh me, '*or make a way for his redeemed to pass through.*'

On the 21st of September, 1734, Mr. Wesley began the practice of reading as he traveled on horseback; and this practice he continued for nearly forty years, till his advanced age obliged him to travel in a carriage.* His frequent journies, often on foot as well as on horseback, and the great and constant labor of preaching, reading, visiting, &c. wherever he was, with hard study and a very abstemious diet, had now very much affected his health. His strength was greatly reduced, and he had frequent returns of spitting

* See plate 6, p. 198, also appendix letter G.

blood. In the night of the 16th of July, he had a return of it in such quantity as waked him out of sleep. The sudden and unexpected manner of its coming on, with the solemnity of the night season, made eternity seem near. He cried to God, "O! prepare me for thy coming, and come when thou will."* His friends began to be alarmed for his safety, and his mother wrote two or three letters, blaming him for the general neglect of his health. He now took the advice of a physician; and by proper care, he gradually recovered strength. The whole force of his mind was now bent on religious subjects.

The health of Mr. Wesley's father, as it has been stated before, had been declining for several years, and now seemed approaching towards the close of life. The old gentleman, conscious of his situation, and desirous that the living of Epworth might remain in the family, wrote to his son John, requesting him to apply for the next presentation. We have already seen, that, when the subject was mentioned the year before, he hesitated, and could not determine one way or the other. But he was now determined not to accept of the living; and stated to his father some reasons for refusing to comply with his request. His father was disappointed; and attacked him, with every argument he could possibly bring to bear upon him. The old gentleman wrote also to his son Samuel on the subject, who warmly took part with his father, and wrote to his brother at Oxford, in December, 1734. "Yesterday," says he, "I received a letter from my father, wherein he tells me, you are unalterably resolved not to accept of a certain living if you could get it. After this declaration, I believe no one can move your mind, but him that made it. You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it, before God, and his high priest, and his church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, teach,

* Private Diary.

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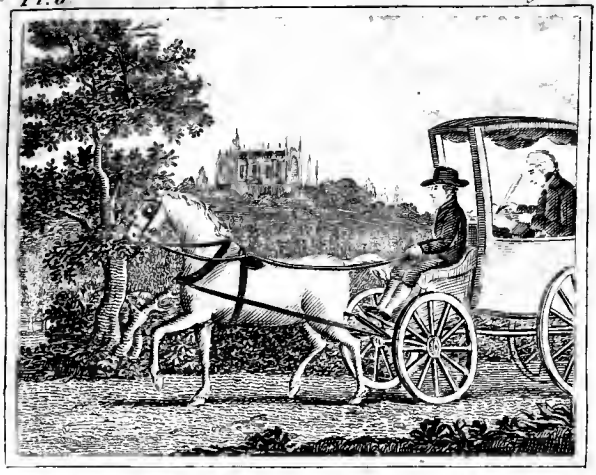

Mr. WESLEY's
method of travelling

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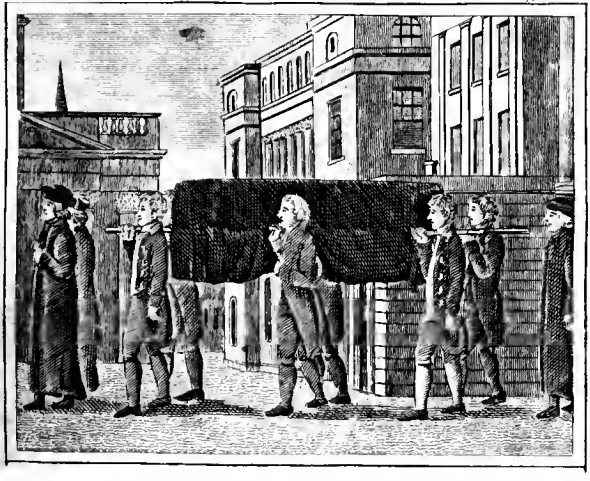

FUNERAL of Mr. WESLEY

to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then, with so vile reservation, as to purpose in your heart that you never would have any so committed? It is not a College, it is not a University, it is the *order of the church*, according to which you were called. Let Charles, if he is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary; *you have put your hand to the plough.*"—John, however, kept himself within his fortress, and answered his brother with caution.

Several letters, on this subject, having passed between them: Mr. John Wesley now thought it time to close the debate. His letter is dated the 4th of March. He observes to his brother, "I had rather dispute with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words. The question is now brought to one point, and the whole argument will lie in one single syllogism. Neither hope of doing greater good, nor fear of any evil, ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to do: But you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish: Therefore, neither that hope nor that fear ought to deter you from it. The only doubt which remains is, whether I have so engaged myself, or not? You think I did at my ordination before God and his High Priest." I think, I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took; it being certain and allowed by all, "*Verbis, in quæ quis jurejurando adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationi Sacramenti modum ac mensuram, præstitui a mente non præstantis sed exigentis juramentum.*"—"That the true sense of the words of an oath, and the mode and extent of its obligation, are not to be determined by him who takes it, but by him who requires it." Therefore it is not I, but the High Priest of God, before whom I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it. "Accordingly, the

post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him, whether I had at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words: "It doth not seem to me, that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his church in your present or some other situation."—Now that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and his Church in my present situation, I have all reasonable evidence."

The late Dr. Priestley, upon a view of Mr. John Wesley's refusal to apply for the living of Epworth, and of his invincible resolution in every thing which appeared to him to concern religion, has declared, "he wanted only *rational principles* of religion, to be one of the first of human characters." Had he had only what the Doctor calls *rational principles of religion*, he might have gone the usual rounds of parochial duty at Epworth, and, it may be, might have succeeded to what is termed a *better living*. But, however he might in that case have been admired as a scholar and a man, he certainly never would have been ranked with the Reformers and Apostles; nor would the present, not to say "future generations, rise up," as the Doctor says they will, "and call him blessed." His first sermon delivered extemporarily, was in All-Hallow's Church, Lombard street, London, in the beginning of the year 1735. At that time, and for years after, to preach without a book was considered as a very wonderful thing.

CHAPTER IV

From his leaving England for America, 1735, to his return in 1737–8. Two years and four months.

Mr. Wesley's father died in April, 1735, and the living in Epworth was given away in May; so that he now considered

himself as settled at Oxford, without any risk of being further molested in his quiet retreat. But a new scene of action was soon proposed to him, of which he had not before the least conception. The trustees of the new colony of Georgia were greatly in want of proper persons to send thither, to preach the Gospel, not only to the colony, but to the Indians. They fixed their eyes upon Mr. John Wesley and some of his friends, as the most proper persons, on account of the regularity of their behavior, their abstemious way of living, and their readiness to endure hardships. On the 28th of August, being in London, he met with his friend Dr. Burton, for whom he had a great esteem; and the next day was introduced to Mr. Oglethorpe, where the matter was proposed to him, and strongly urged upon him by such arguments as they thought most likely to dispose his mind to accept of the proposal. It does not appear that, Mr. Wesley gave them any positive answer. He thought it best to take the opinion of his friends. Accordingly he wrote to his brother Samuel, and visited Mr. Law, and in three or four days, set out for Manchester, to consult Mr. Clayton, Mr. Byrom, and several others whose judgment he respected. From thence he went to Epworth, and laid the matter before his mother. Her answer as he related it to me, was worthy of the mother and the son: "had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His eldest brother also consented to his acceptance of the proposal. His brother Samuel did the same. Mr. Wesley still hesitated; on the 8th of September, Dr. Burton wrote to him, pressing him to a compliance. He now consented to go to Georgia.

Mr. Charles Wesley at this time resided at Oxford, and when his brother consented to Dr. Burton's proposal, he also declared his willingness to accompany him in this new and untried path, which promised nothing except what they ardently desired,—a more complete deliverance from the

world. This design, respecting Charles, his brother Samuel vehemently opposed; but in vain. Mr. Charles engaged himself as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also as secretary for Indian affairs.

A little before they left England, Dr. Burton suggested that it might be well if Mr. Charles Wesley were also ordained before he left this country. Mr. John Wesley overruled his brother's inclination in this thing also, and he was ordained Deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford; and the Sunday following, Priest by Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London:* Mr. Wesley now prepared for his voyage to America.

Mr. Hampson, in his Memoirs of Mr. Wesley, expresses no small surprise, when he comes to treat of his mission to Georgia, at what appears to him a strange and unaccountable change of mind in one who had just before evinced such unshaken firmness. "We imagined," says he, "that nothing less than stern necessity could have induced him to quit his beloved retirement." Had he enjoyed any intimacy with Mr. Wesley, he would have been able easily to account for it. This mission proved, in general, a scene of temptation and trial in the wilderness, "where," says Mr. Wesley, "God humbled me, and proved me, and showed me what was in my heart."

On Tuesday, October 14, 1735, Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles set off from London for Gravesend, accompanied by Mr. Ingham and Mr. Delamotte, in order to embark for Georgia. "Our end," says he, "in leaving our native country, was, not to avoid want, (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings,) nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honor; but singly this, to save our souls, to live wholly to the glory of God." Accordingly, the two following days, which they spent partly on board and partly on shore, they employed in exhorting one another "*to*

* Mr. C. Wesley's letter to Dr. Chandler.

shake off every weight, and to run with patience the race set before them!" There were six and twenty Germans on board, members of the Moravian Church. Mr. Wesley was much struck with their Christian deportment, and immediately set himself to learn the German language, in order to converse with them.

They sometimes visited General Oglethorpe, who was the Governor of Georgia, and with whom they sailed, in his cabin. Upon one of those occasions, as Mr. Wesley informed me, the officers, and certain gentlemen who had been invited, took some liberties with the clergymen, not relishing their gravity. The General was roused at this, and, in a manner not to be misunderstood, cried out, "What do you mean, Sirs? Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of learning and respectability. They are my friends; and whoever offers any affront to them, insults me." From this time they were treated with great respect by all the passengers.

"Believing," says Mr. Wesley, "the denying ourselves in the smallest instance, might, by the blessing of God, be helpful to us, we wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined ourselves to vegetable food, chiefly rice and biscuit."

That the time he spent with the passengers was not wholly lost upon them, we also learn from several passages in his Journals. Many were deeply awakened; others were instructed in the first principles of the Christian religion, who were before entirely ignorant; and some, who had lived for years in a constant neglect of the ordinances of the Gospel, were prevailed upon to attend them by the indefatigable labors of himself and his coadjutors.

But though his eye was single; though his life was not only harmless but exemplary; though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and sacrificed ease and honor, and every other temporal gratification, that he might follow Christ;

yet it is certain, he was still very little acquainted with true experimental religion. This the Lord now began to show him, First, by the fear of death, which, notwithstanding all his efforts, brought him into bondage, whenever danger was apparent. "At those times," he remarks, "I plainly felt I was unfit, because I was unwilling to die;"* and, Secondly, the lively and victorious faith, which he evidently perceived in some of his fellow-passengers, still more convinced him, that he possessed not the saving power of religion.

Speaking of the Germans, he remarks, "I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behavior. Of their humility they have given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the English would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive, no pay, saying, 'It was good for their proud hearts,' and 'their loving Savior had done more for them.' And every day had given them occasion of showing a meekness, which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger, and revenge. In the midst of the Psalm, wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterward, 'Was you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, no.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He re-

* Mr. Southey, however, would have us believe, that this fear of death arose merely from the state of his stomach!

plied mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.'"

A circumstance occurred in the course of his voyage, which is not unworthy of notice. Mr. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the cabin of General Oglethorpe, stepped in to inquire the cause; on which the General immediately addressed him, 'Mr. Wesley, you must excuse me, I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear. You know, the only wine I drink, is Cyprus wine, as it agrees with me the best of any. I therefore provided myself with several dozens of it, and this villain Grimaldi, (his Italian servant, who was present, and almost dead with fear,) has drunk nearly the whole of it. But I will be revenged. He shall be tied hand and foot, and carried to the man of war. (He alluded to a ship of war which sailed with them.) The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for I never forgive."—"Then, I hope, sir, (said Mr. Wesley, looking calmly at him,) you never sin." The General was quite confounded at the reproof; and, after a pause, putting his hand into his pocket, he took out a bunch of keys, which he threw at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

Thursday, February 5, 1736, they arrived at Savannah river, in Georgia, and about eight the next morning, landed on a small uninhabited island. General Oglethorpe led them to a rising ground, where they kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for Savannah. When the rest of the people came on shore, they also joined together in prayer. Upon this occasion Mr. Wesley observes, that the Second Lesson, Mark vi, seemed to him peculiarly suitable.

Sunday, March 7, Mr. Wesley entered on his ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the epistle for the day, being the xiiith of the first of Corinthians. In the Second Lesson, Luke xviii, was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which

he himself, (and consequently his followers,) was to meet with from the world; and his gracious promise to those who are content, *Nudi nudum Christum sequi*:* "*Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parent, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.*

"Yet," says he, "notwithstanding the plain declarations of our Lord, notwithstanding my own repeated experience, notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read, or heard of: nay, and the reason of the thing, evincing it to a demonstration, that all who love not the light, must hate him who is continually laboring to pour it in upon them;—I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterward sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie to experience, and reason, and Scripture, all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this attentive, serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of him that spake it. O, who can believe what his heart abhors? Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! Let us love thy cross! Then shall we believe, '*If we suffer with Thee, we shall also reign with Thee!*'"

Mr. Charles Wesley proceeded to Frederica, Mr. Oglethorpe chiefly residing there. His brother remained at Savannah,—both waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians. On March the 9th, he landed at Simon's Island, near Frederica, and as he informs us in his Journal, his spirit immediately revived. "No sooner," says he, "did

* Nakedly to follow a naked Christ.

I enter on my ministry, than God gave me a new heart;* so true is that saying of Bishop Hall, 'The calling of God never leaves a man unchanged; neither did God ever employ any in his service, whom he did not enable for the work.'"

July 26.—Mr. C. Wesley set out for Charleston on his way to England. Thus far his brother accompanied him; and they arrived there on the 31st of July.† He now found his desires renewed to recover the image of God; and at the Sacrament was encouraged, in an unusual manner, to hope for pardon, and to strive against sin.

While Mr. C. Wesley stayed at Charleston, his bloody flux and fever hung upon him, and rather increased. Notwithstanding this, he was determined to go in the first ship that sailed for England. His friends endeavored to dissuade him from it, both because the ship was very leaky, and the Captain, a mere beast of a man, was almost continually drunken. But he was deaf to their advice. "The public business," says he, "that hurries me to England, being of that importance, that as their Secretary I could not answer to the Trustees for Georgia, the loss of a day." Accordingly he engaged his passage on board the London Galley, which left Charleston on the 16th of August. But they soon found the Captain, while on shore, had neglected every thing to which he ought to have attended. The vessel was too leaky to bear the voyage: and the Captain, drinking scarcely nothing but gin, had never troubled his head about taking in a sufficient quantity of water; so that, on the 26th, they were obliged to be reduced to short allowance. Meeting afterward with stormy weather, the leak became alarming; and their difficulties increased so fast upon them, that they were obliged to steer for Boston, in New England,

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* An anticipation of the faith which he afterward received.

† This account also agrees with Mr. John Wesley's Journal. See his Works, Vol. XXVI, p. 145.

where they arrived, with much difficulty and danger, on the 24th of September.

Mr. C. Wesley was soon known at Boston, and met with a hospitable reception among the ministers, both of the town and neighborhood.

Mr. C. Wesley did not go on board as he expected, the ship being detained some time longer. During his stay here, his disorder returned with violence, and reduced him to a state of very great weakness. On the 15th of October he wrote to his brother, and continued his letter in a kind of journal to the 25th, when he went on board the ship, and sailed for England.

On the 27th, Mr. C. Wesley had so far recovered his strength that he was able to read prayers. The next day the Captain informed him, that a storm was approaching. In the evening it came on with dreadful violence, and raged all night.

On the 29th, in the morning, they shipped so prodigious a sea, that it washed away their sheep, half of their hogs, and drowned most of their fowls. The ship was heavily laden, and the sea streamed in so plentifully at the sides, that it was as much as four men could do, by continual pumping, to keep her above water. "I rose and lay down by turns," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "but could remain in no posture long. I strove vehemently to pray, but in vain; I still persisted in striving, but without effect. I prayed for power to pray,* for faith in Jesus Christ; continually repeated his name, till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew that I abode under the shadow of the Almighty."

At three in the afternoon, the storm was at the height; at four, the ship made so much water, that the Captain, finding it otherwise impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizen-mast. "In this dreadful moment," says

* He means with confidence and comfort.

Mr. C. Wesley, "I bless God I found the comfort of hope; and such joy in finding I could hope, as the world can neither give nor take away. I had that conviction of the power of God present with me, overbalancing my strongest passion, fear, and raising me above what I am by nature, as surpassed all rational evidence, and gave me a taste of the Divine goodness." He at that time again anticipated the power and sweetness of Christian faith; no uncommon thing with those who mourn for it. See this subject well illustrated in Mr. John Wesley's Sermon on "The Spirit of bondage, and of adoption."

On the 30th, the storm abated; and "on Sunday the 31st," he observes, "my first business was, (may it be the business of all my days!) to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. We all joined in thanks for our deliverance most of the day."

They soon met with another storm, but not so violent as the former; and continuing their voyage, with some intervening difficulties and dangers, till the third of December, the ship arrived opposite Deal, and the passengers came safe on shore. "I kneeled down," says Mr. C. Wesley, "and blessed the hand that had conducted me through such inextricable mazes, and desired I might give up my country again, whenever God should require it."—A state of mind very different from that of many who have been called to labor for the Lord!

Leaving Mr. Charles Wesley safe in his native land, we shall now proceed to his brother Mr. John Wesley.

On the 18th of March, 1736, he wrote to his mother as follows; "I doubt not but you are already informed of the many blessings which God gave us in our passage; as my brother Wesley must, before now, have received a particular account of the circumstances of our voyage; which he would not fail to transmit to you by the first opportunity.

"We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination; and, by all I can learn, exceeding healthful,—even in summer, for those who are not intemperate. It has pleased God that I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the Continent: nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners, who is sick at this time. Many of them indeed, are, I believe, very angry already: for a gentleman, no longer ago than last light, made a ball; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time, the church was full, and the ball-room so empty that the entertainment could not go forward.

April 4th, Mr. Wesley set out for Frederica, in a pettiawga, a sort of flat-bottomed barge, and the following evening they anchored near Skidoway island, where the water at flood was twelve or fourteen feet deep. Mr. Wesley wrapped himself up in a large cloak, and lay down on the quarter-deck: but in the course of the night he rolled out of his cloak, and fell into the sea, so fast asleep that he knew not where he was, till his mouth was full of water. He swam round to a boat, and got out without more injury than that of wetting his clothes. This instance gives us a lively view of his fortitude and presence of mind in the midst of surprise and danger. Mr. Wesley left Frederica, and arrived again at Savannah on the 20th.

Not finding any door open for the prosecution of the grand design which induced him to visit America,—the conversion of the Indians,—he and Mr. Delamotte considered, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock under their care. And they agreed, (1.) To advise the most serious among them, to form themselves into a sort of little Society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to improve, instruct, and exhort one another. (2.) To select, out of these, a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded partly by their con-

versing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to their house; and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.

Some time after the evening service, as many of the parishioners as desired it, met at Mr. Wesley's house, (as they did also on Wednesday evening,) and spent about an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A smaller number (mostly those who designed to communicate the next day) met there on Saturday evening; and a few of these came to him on the other evenings, and passed half an hour in the same employment.

He had now another proof of the power of gospel-faith. One of the Moravians being ill of a consumption, he informed Bishop Nitschman of it. "He will soon be well," said he, "he is ready for the Bridegroom." Calling to see him afterward, and asking how he did, "My departure (said he) I hope is at hand." Mr. Wesley then asked, "Are you troubled at that?" He replied, "O no; to depart and to be with Christ, is far better. I desire no more of this bad world. Hy hope and my joy and my love are there." The next time he saw him, the poor man said, "I desire nothing more, than for God to forgive my many and great sins. I would be humble. I would be the humblest creature living. My heart is humble and broken for my sins. Tell me, teach me, what I shall do to please God. I would fain do whatever is his will." Mr. Wesley said, "It is his will, you should suffer." He answered, "Then I *will* suffer. I will gladly suffer whatever pleases Him." The next day, finding him weaker, he asked, "Do you still desire to die?" he said, "Yes; but I dare not pray for it, for I fear I should displease my heavenly Father. His will be done. Let Him work his will, in my life, or in my death."

Some time before this, a few of the Indians had made him a visit, and seemed desirous of hearing *the great word*, as they called the preaching of the Gospel. About twen-

ty of them were now at Savannah. Five of the principal of them came to him with an interpreter: and the following interesting conversation passed between them.

Q. Do you believe there is One above, who is over all things?

Paustoobee, one of their Chiefs, answered, We believe there are four beloved things above; the clouds, the sun, the clear sky, and He that lives in the clear sky.*

Q. Do you believe, there is but One that lives in the clear sky?

A. We believe there are two with him; three in all.

Q. Do you think, he made the sun and the other beloved things?

A. We cannot tell. Who hath seen?

Q. Do you think he made you?

A. We think, he made all men at first.

Q. How did he make them at first?

A. Out of the ground.

Q. Do you believe he loves you?

A. I do not know; I cannot see him.

Q. But has he often saved your life?

A. He has. Many bullets have gone on this side, and many on that side, but he would never let them hurt me. And many bullets have gone into these young men, and they are alive!†

Q. Then, cannot he save you from your enemies now?

A. Yes; but we know not if he will. We have now so many enemies round about us, that I think of nothing but death. And if I am to die, I shall die, and I will die like a man. But if he will have me to live I shall live. Though I had ever so many enemies, he can destroy them all.

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* See Plate I, page 19.

† We see this Indian, like the heathen mentioned in Acts xxviii, believed in a Particular Providence, which many, even the learned, affect to despise.

Q. How do you know that?

A. From what I have seen. When our enemies came against us before, then the beloved clouds came for us. And often much rain, and sometimes hail, has come upon them, and that in a very hot day. And I saw when many French and Choctaws and other nations came against one of our towns: And the ground made a noise under them, and the Beloved Ones in the air behind them: And they were afraid and went away, and left their meat and drink and their guns. I tell no lie. All these saw it too.

Q. Have you heard such noises at other times?

A. Yes, often: Before and after almost every battle.

Q. What sort of noises were they?

A. Like the noise of drums and guns and shouting.

Q. Have you heard any such lately?

A. Yes: Four days after our last battle with the French.

Q. Then you heard nothing before it?

A. The night before, I dreamed I heard many drums up there, and many trumpets there, and much stamping of feet and shouting. Till then I thought we should all die. But then I thought the Beloved Ones were come to help us. And the next day I heard above a hundred guns go off, before the fight began. And I said "When the sun is there, the Beloved Ones will help us, and we shall conquer our enemies." And we did so.

Q. Do you think and talk of the Beloved Ones?

A. We think of them always wherever we are. We talk of them and to them, at home and abroad; in peace, in war, before and after we fight; and, indeed, whenever and wherever me meet together.

Q. Where do you think your souls go after death?

A. We believe the souls of the red men walk up and down near the place where they died, or where their bodies lie. For we have often heard cries and noises near the place, where any prisoners have been burnt.

Q. Where do the souls of white men go after death?

A. We cannot tell. We have not seen.

Q. Our belief is, that the souls of bad men only walk up and down: but the souls of good men go up.

A. I believe so too. But I told you the talk of the nation.

Mr. ANDREWS, the Interpreter. They said at the burying (which Mr. Wesley had attended shortly before,) "They knew what you was doing. You was speaking to the Beloved Ones above, to take up the soul of the young woman."

Q. We have a Book that tells us many things of the Beloved Ones above. Would you be glad to know them?

A. We have no time now but to fight. If we should ever be at peace, we should be glad to know.

Q. Do you ever expect to know what the white men know?

Mr. ANDREWS. They told Mr. Oglethorpe, they believed "the time will come when the red and white men will be one."

Q. What do the French teach you?

A. The *French Black Kings** never go out. We see you go about. We like that. That is good.

Q. How came your nation to the knowledge they have?

A. As soon as ever the ground was sound, and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men. Our old men know more. But all of them do not know. There are but a few, whom the Beloved Ones chooses from a child, and is in them, and takes care of them, and teaches them. They know these things, and our old men practise, therefore they know; but I do not practise, therefore I know little.

March 4.—Mr. Wesley wrote to the trustees for Georgia, giving them an account of his expenses from March

* So they called the Priests.

1, 1736, to March 1, 1737, which deducting extraordinary expenses for repairing the parsonage house, journies to Frederica, &c. amounted for himself and Mr. Delamotte, to forty four pounds, four shillings and four pence. At the same time he accepted of the fifty pounds a year, sent by the society for his maintenance, which, however, was in a manner forced upon him, as he had formed a resolution not to accept of it, saying his fellowship was sufficient for him.* For a particular account of the trials, perplexities and persecutions Mr. Wesley suffered, passed through and endured, in America, the reader is referred to Moore's life of Wesley, Vol. I. Sometime in November, 1737, he determined to return to England. About the first of December, he left Savannah, in company with three other persons.

Mr. Wesley and his three companions suffered great hardships in traveling from Purrysburg to Port Royal. Not being able to procure a guide, they set out an hour before sunrise without one. The consequence was, they lost their way ; and wandered in the woods till evening, without any food but part of a gingerbread cake divided among them, and without a drop of water. At night two of the company dug with their hands about three feet deep, and found water, with which they were refreshed. They lay down together on the ground, (in December,) "And I at least," says Mr. Wesley, "slept till near six in the morning." They rose, took the rest of the gingerbread cake, and wandered on till between one and two o'clock, before they came to any house, or obtained any further refreshment. December 6, after many difficulties and delays they came to Port Royal, and the next day walked to Beaufort, on the opposite

* He thought differently afterward. He did not think that either Mr. Fletcher, or Mr. Perronet, did well in not claiming their dues, as it tended to injure their successors. This also I know from himself.

side of the island. Here Mr. Jones, the minister of the place, invited Mr. Wesley to his house, and gave him, as he acknowledges, a lively idea of the old English hospitality. Mr. Wesley adds, in his private Journal, "Yet observing the elegance, and more than neatness of every thing about him, I could not but sigh to myself, and say, *Heu delicatum discipulum duri Magistri!*"* Perhaps, this remark was more in the Mystic than in the Christian style; and, to adopt the language which Mr. Wesley sometimes used, he was severely reproved for it, shortly after, being almost refused the necessaries of life.

Mr. Wesley proceeds: "Early on Tuesday, December 13, we came to Charleston, where I expected trials of quite a different nature and more dangerous: contempt and hunger being easy to be borne; but who can bear respect and fulness of bread?"† On the 16th, he parted from his faithful friend, Mr. Delamotte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from England. On the 22d, he took his leave of America, after having preached the Gospel, as he observes, in Savannah, "not as he ought, but as he was able, for one year and nearly nine months."

Such a burning and shining light was not to be hidden in the then uncultivated wilds of Georgia. He who had *sold all* for God and his truth, and who was fitted to defend that truth against all the deceivableness of the carnal mind, with all its additional weapons of vain philosophy, or worldly prudence, was called to act in a very different sphere. And though permitted by the only wise God our Savior, to be "*sifted as wheat*," and tried in the furnace of adversity, he was preserved and brought forth as gold, which

"Returns more pure, and brings forth all its weight."

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* Alas, for the delicate disciple of a Master that endured all hardness

† Those who have *faith*, and who abide therein.

Divine Providence was about to lead him into a field of action in which every gift that God had given him was tried to the uttermost, and "*was found unto praise, and honor, and glory.*"

Mr. Wesley says, "In 1727, my brother and I reading the bible, saw inward and outward holiness therein, followed after it, and invited others so to do. In 1737, we saw that this holiness comes by faith, and that men are justified before they are sanctified. But still holiness was our point, *inward and outward holiness.*

In the beginning of the following May, (1738,) Mr. Whitefield arrived at Savannah, where he found some serious persons, the fruits of Mr. Wesley's ministry, glad to receive him. He had now an opportunity of inquiring upon the spot, into the circumstances of the late disputes, and bears testimony to the ill usage Mr. Wesley had received. When he was at Charleston, Mr. Garden acquainted him with the ill treatment Mr. Wesley had met with, and assured him, that, were the same arbitrary proceedings to commence against him, he would defend him with life and fortune.* These testimonies, of persons so respectable, and capable of knowing all the circumstances of the affair, with candid persons, must do away all suspicions, with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct.

January 13.—They had a thorough storm.—On the 24th, being about 160 leagues from the Land's-end, he observes, his mind was full of thought, and he wrote as follows: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh! who shall convert me? Who is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion; I can talk well, nay, and believe myself while no danger is near: But let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, '*To die is gain!*'

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* Roberts' Narrative of the Life of Mr. George Whitefield, p. 58.

" I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!"

"I think verily if the Gospel be true, I am safe—I now believe the Gospel is true. '*I show my faith by my works*,' by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me, sees I would be a Christian. Therefore '*are my ways not like other men's ways*.' Therefore I have been, I am, I am content to be, '*a by-word, a proverb of reproach*.' But in a storm I think, What, if the gospel be not true; then thou art of all men most foolish,—O who will deliver me from this fear of death! What shall I do? Where shall I fly from it?"

January 29, 1738.—They once more saw English land: And Feb. 1, Mr. Wesley landed at Deal; where he was informed Mr. Whitefield had sailed the day before for Georgia. He read prayers, and explained a portion of Scripture to a large company at the inn; and, on the third, arrived safe in London.

CHAPTER V.

From his return to England, 1737-8, to the first Conference, 1744—about seven years.

After waiting on General Oglethorpe, (who was now in England,) and on the trustees of Georgia he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the Indians in America. The churches where he preached were crowded. This soon produced a complaint, that there was no room, "for the best in the parish;" and that objection, united to the offense which was given by his plain, heart-searching sermons, produced

in each place at last the following repulsion, "Sir, you must preach here no more." That Mr. Wesley had not the true Christian faith, is manifest, for he had not that deliverance from the fear of death, nor victory over all sin, which are the fruits of that faith.*

It appears from Mr. Charles Wesley's Journal, that most of the trustees for Georgia, were dissenters.

Dec. 7, 1737.—One of these Trustees, having called on Mr. C. Wesley, the latter observes, "we had much discourse of Georgia, and my brother's persecution among that stiff-necked people."

In the beginning of February, 1738, about the time Mr. John Wesley returned from Georgia, Peter Boehler arrived in England. He soon became acquainted with the two brothers, and on the 20th of this month, prevailed with Mr. Charles Wesley to assist him in learning English. He was now at Oxford, and Boehler soon entered into some close conversation with him, and with some scholars who were serious, and who could converse in Latin. He pressed upon them the necessity of Gospel faith: He showed them, that many who had been awakened had fallen asleep again, for want of attaining to it. He spoke much of the necessity of prayer and faith, but none of them seemed to understand him.

Mr. John Wesley had now also become acquainted with Peter Boehler. On the 7th of February, ("a day," he observes in his Journal, "much to be remembered,") he met that gentleman and two other teachers of the Moravian

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* Hebrews, xi. 6.—For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Hence there are different degrees of faith, saving as far as faith extends. Mr. Wesley believed in God, and was saved from infidelity; he believed God was a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and was saved from despair, and continued to seek: though, at this time he had not the faith that justifies the ungodly.—*Compiler.*

Church. He had supposed; that a strict and self-denying regard to the duties which he owed to God and man, would produce in him the true Christian faith. In this he was painfully disappointed. He told me, that, together with *those fruits meet for repentance*, he had given himself a fortnight to root out of his heart each of the spiritual evils which he discovered therein,—pride, anger, self-will, &c.; but found, at the end of the prescribed time, that his enemy still retained possession, and seemed even to increase in strength. He well noted this in his sermon before the University, on *Salvation by faith.* "Can you empty the great deep, drop by drop?" &c. No: our present salvation depends much more on what we *receive*, than on what we *do*. He now began to feel something of this poverty of spirit.

He now went to see his brother Samuel and some other friends, and afterward took a longer journey. He returned to Oxford. Here he again conversed largely with Peter Boehler, and by "him," said he, "in the hand of the Great God, I was clearly convinced of the want of that faith, whereby alone we are saved."

Immediately he felt an inclination to leave off preaching. "How," thought he, "can I preach to others, who have not faith myself?" He asked his friend, whether he should leave it off or not. "By no means," said he, "preach faith *till* you have it; and then *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith."

But a difficulty still remained: How is this faith given? He had now no objection to what his friend said of the *nature* of Christian faith; that it is (to use the words of the Church of England,) *a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he is reconciled to the favor of God.* "Neither," said he, "could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. Those passages of Scripture, '*The Spirit itself beareth witness*

with our spirit that we are the children of God:' And '*He that believeth hath the witness in himself,*' fully convinced me of the former: As '*Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin;*' and '*Whosoever believeth is born of God,*' did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of *an instantaneous work.* I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light,—from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles; but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions; scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but *one* retreat left, viz. '*Thus*, I grant, God wrought in the *first* ages of Christianity; but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?'"

"But," proceeds he, "I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses; who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them, in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, '*Lord help thou my unbelief?*'"

He proceeds, "I asked P. Boehler again, Whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others? He said, 'No; do not hide in the earth the talent God has given you.' Accordingly I spoke clearly and fully at Blendon to Mr. Delamotte's family, of the nature and fruits of Christian faith. Mr. Broughton and my brother were there. Mr. Broughton's great objection was, 'He could never think that I had not faith, who had done and suffered such things.' My brother was very angry, and told me, 'I did not know what mischief I had done by talking thus.' And indeed it did please God

then to kindle a fire which I trust shall never be extinguished."

He now declared every where "*the faith as it is in Jesus:*" "a strange doctrine," says he, "which some, who did not care to contradict it, (for indeed how could they without both denying the Bible and the Church of England?) yet knew not what to make of it. But some who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard and received it gladly."

March 27, 1738.—About this time he began to pray extempore. On a certain occasion; he says, "We prayed first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour."

Mr. Wesley again observes, that on Saturday, April 1, being at Mr. Foxe's society, he found his heart so full, that he could not confine himself to the forms of prayer they were accustomed to use there. "Neither," says he, "do I propose to be confined to them any more; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions." When God gives the spirit of prayer deliverance is near.

Mr. Wesley and Mr. Broughton having returned to London, Mr. C. Wesley began to read Haliburton's life. It produced in him great humiliation, self-abasement, and a sense of his want of that faith which brings "*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" But these effects soon passed away as a morning cloud. A degree of conviction, however, that possibly he might be wrong, had taken hold of his mind, and continued to make him uneasy. This uneasiness was increased by a return of his disorder on the 28th, when he arrived in London. Here Peter Boehler visited him again, and prayed with him. Mr. Charles Wesley now thought it was his duty to consider Boehler's doctrine, and to examine himself whether he was in the faith; and if not, never to rest till he had attained it. Still, however, there was a secret wish within his heart that this

new doctrine, as he then thought it, might not be true; and hence arose a joy when he imagined he had found an argument against it. This argument was from his own experience, and he deemed it unanswerable. Having received benefit by bleeding, he attended the sacrament on the first of May, and felt a degree of peace in receiving it. "Now," said he to himself, "I have demonstration against the Moravian doctrine, viz. that a man cannot have peace without assurance of his pardon. I now have peace, yet cannot say of a surety that my sins are forgiven." His triumph was very short: His peace immediately left him, and he sunk into greater doubts and distress than before. He now began to be convinced, that he had not that faith which puts the true believer in possession of the benefits and privileges of the Gospel. For some days following, he had a faint desire to attain it, and prayed for it. He then began to speak of the necessity of this faith to his friends; and he determined not to rest till he had the happy experience of it in himself.

May 17.—Mr. C. Wesley first saw "LUTHER on the Galatians," which Mr. Holland had accidentally met with. They immediately began to read him: "And my friend," adds Mr. C. Wesley, "was so affected in hearing him read, that he breathed sighs and groans unutterable. I also *marvelled that we were so soon and entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel.* Who would believe, that our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone?* I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine; especially while our Articles and Homilies stand unrepealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away. From

* Mr. C. Wesley did not then see the nature of Antinomianism in that work,—the infernal shadow that has ever followed the true faith. Of this, Luther was not himself conscious when he wrote that book.

this time I endeavored to ground as many of our friends as came to see me, in this fundamental truth,—*Salvation by faith alone*—not an idle and dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is incessantly productive of all good works, and all holiness."

Mr. C. Wesley's knowledge of himself, and conscious want of peace with God, on a foundation that cannot be skaken, furnished him with a key which opened the true meaning of the Scriptures. He saw the gospel contained ample provision for all his wants, and that its operation on the mind is also admirably adapted to the human faculties. He now lost the pride of literature, and sought *the kingdom of heaven as a little child:* He counted all things as dung and dross in comparison of it; and all his thoughts, his desires, his hopes, his fears, had some relation to it. He was now brought to the birth. On Whitsunday 21st, he waked in hope and expectation of soon attaining the object of his wishes,—the knowledge of God reconciled in Christ Jesus. At nine o'clock his brother and some friends came to him, and sung a hymn suited to the day. When they left him, he betook himself to prayer. Soon afterward a person came and said, in a very solemn manner, "Believe in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities." The words went through his heart, and animated him with confidence. He looked into the Scripture, and read, "*Now, Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee.*" He then cast his eyes on these words, "*He hath put a new song into my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God; many shall see it and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.*" Afterward he opened upon Isaiah xl, 1, "*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*" In reading these passages of Scripture, he

was enabled to view Christ as "*set forth a propitiation for his sins, through faith in his blood,*" and received to his unspeakable comfort, that peace and rest in God, which he had so earnestly sought.

The two brothers were now led to pray according to their wants, and the exercises of their own minds; but they were greatly censured by some persons, particularly by their brother Samuel, when they began this practice. That a form of prayer may be useful, and also proper on some occasions, especially in public worship, we readily grant. But to say, that we shall not ask a favor of God, nor return him thanks; or that we shall hold no intercourse with Him in our public assemblies, but in a set of words dictated to us by others, is an assumption which is not warranted either by Scripture or reason, and it is ill adapted to edification or comfort.

An old friend soon after called on Mr. C. Wesley, under great apprehensions that he was running mad. His fears were not a little increased, when he heard him speak of some instances of the power and goodness of God. His friend told him that he expected to see rays of light round his head! and said a good deal more in the same strain. Finding, by Mr. C. Wesley's conversation, that he was past recovery, he begged him to fly from London, and took his leave in despair of doing him any good.

May the 23d, he wrote a hymn on his own conversion. Upon showing it to Mr. Bray, a thought was suggested to his mind, that he had done wrong, and displeased God. His heart immediately sunk within him; but the shock lasted only for a moment. "I clearly discerned," says he, "it was a device of the enemy to keep glory from God. It is most usual with him to preach humility, when speaking would endanger his kingdom and do honor to Christ. Least of all, would he have us tell *what God has done for our souls*, so tenderly does *he* guard us against pride! But God

has showed me that he can defend me from it, while speaking for Him. In his name, therefore, and through his strength, will I perform my vows unto the Lord, of '*not hiding his righteousness within my heart.*'"

Mr. John Wesley, although not yet a partaker of it, continued to declare "*the faith as it is in Jesus*," which those that were convinced of sin gladly received. A day or two following, he was much confirmed in the truth, by hearing the experience of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox: "Two living witnesses," says he, "that God *can*, at least, if he *does* not always give that faith whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven."

About this time he was invited to preach in some of the churches. But, as before, many (particularly of the chief persons in his congregations,) would not endure his plain, heart-searching discourses. He was soon told at each of these also, "Sir, you must preach here no more."

He also was now *brought to the birth.* "*His soul truly waited upon God*," knowing that "*from him cometh our salvation.*" But so much the more did he "*abhor himself, and repent as in dust and ashes.*" As he now expected, that Christ, given for him, would be manifested in him, he also felt that compunction, that deep self-abasement, which must ever precede true living faith in the Son of God. His state of mind at this time he thus pathetically expresses, in the following letter to a friend:

"O why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as me! Lord, '*let the dead bury their dead.*' But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt* send, and showest mercy by whom thou *wilt* show mercy! Amen! Be it then according to thy will! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.—

"I feel what you say, (though not enough,) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just and good. I know, every thought, every temper of my soul, ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how have I fallen from the glory of God! I feel, that I '*am sold under sin.*' I know, that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire: I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

"Yet I hear a voice, (and is it not the voice of God?) saying, '*Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth is passed from death unto life.*' *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*'*

"O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel '*peace with God,*' and '*joy in the Holy Ghost?*' Does his '*Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?*' Alas! with mine he does not. Nor, I fear, with yours. O thou Savior of men, save us from trusting in any thing but Thee! Draw us after Thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with "*all peace and joy in believing,*' and let nothing separate us from thy love, in time or in eternity!"

The account which immediately follows, is of such deep importance, that I am constrained to give it entire in his own words. Mr. Wesley's actual obtaining the true *faith*

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* He was now *poor in spirit*, and therefore *the kingdom of heaven was his.* He was soon put in possession. The Lord could now, in truth, *impute his faith for righteousness.*

of the Gospel, is a point of the utmost magnitude, not only with respect to himself, but to others. For it was not till after this, that God was pleased to own him in such a remarkable manner in the salvation of souls, as was evidenced in his future labors.

"What occurred on Wednesday, May 23, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood. Let him that cannot receive it, ask of the Father of lights, that he would give more light to him and me.

"I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that '*washing of the Holy Ghost*,' which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I indeed was as ignorant of the true meaning of the law, as I was of the gospel of Christ.

"The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties; and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was—(1.) Not being so bad as other people. (2.) Having still a kindness for religion. And (3.) Reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my prayers.

"Being removed to the University, for five years I still said my prayers, both in public and in private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not, all this while, so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went

on habitually, and (for the most part) very contentedly, in some or other known sin; indeed, with some intermissions and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call *repentance*.

"When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time the Providence of God directing me to Kempis's Christian Pattern, I began to see, that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis, for being *too strict*, though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before; and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon *a new life*. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, doing so much, and living so good a life, I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

"Removing soon after to another College, I executed a resolution, which, I was before convinced, was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins. I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modeled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's 'Christian Perfection and Serious Call,' (although I was much offended at many parts of both,) yet they convinced me more than

ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him, as I had never done before: And, by my continued endeavor to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

"In 1730, I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and sick in town, and doing what other good I could by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessaries of life. I soon became a by-word for so doing, and rejoiced that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient church, taking no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any farther. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful. I carefully used, both in public and private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good: I, for that reason, suffered evil: and all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised, not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that '*other foundation can no man lay than than that which is laid by God, even Christ Jesus.*'

"Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before, that outward works are

nothing, being alone: and, in several conversations instructed me how to pursue inward holiness, or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions, (though I then received them as the words of God,) I cannot but now observe—(1.) That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting in outward works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. (2.) That he recommended, (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them,) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul and uniting it with God. Now these were, in truth, as much *my own works* as visiting the sick or clothing the naked: and the *union with* God thus pursued, was as really *my own righteousness* as any I had before pursued under another name.

"In this *refined* way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness, (so zealously inculcated by the Mystic writers) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving England. On shipboard, however, I was again active in outward works, where it pleased God, of his free mercy, to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavored to show me a more excellent way. But I understood it not at first: I was too learned and too wise: So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And continued preaching and following after and trusting in that righteousness, whereby no flesh can be justified.

"All the time I was at Savannah, I was thus '*beating the air*.' Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which, by a living faith in him, bringing salvation '*to every one that believeth*,' I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so labored in the fire all my days. I was now properly '*under the law*;' I knew that the law of God was spiritual; I consented to it that it was good; yea, I delighted in it '*after the inner man*.' Yet was I '*carnal, sold under sin*.' Every day was I constrained to cry out, '*What I do, I al-*

*low not; for what I would, I do not; but what I hate, that I do. To will is, indeed, present with me: but how to perform that which is good, I find not: For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; even the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and still bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.'**

"In this state I was, indeed, fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now, it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome and in heaviness: sometimes I overcame and was in joy: For, as in the former state, I had some foretaste of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, (which had now continued above ten years,) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble; I had many sensible comforts, which, indeed, are no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still '*under the law*,' not '*under grace*,' the state which most who are called Christians are content to live and die in: For I was only striving with, not freed from sin: neither had I '*the witness of the Spirit with my spirit*,' and, indeed, I could not; for '*I sought it not by faith, but*,' as it were '*by the works of the law*.'

"In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced, that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true living faith was the *one thing needful* for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was wholly void

* Romans, vii.

of this faith, but only thought I had not enough of it. So that, when Peter Boehler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, which is but one, that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, 'Dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,' I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new Gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this: Therefore, I disputed with all my might, and labored to prove, that faith might be where these were not, especially where the sense of forgiveness was not: For all the Scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw no one could, in the nature of things, have such a sense of forgiveness and not feel it: but I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

"When I met Peter Boehler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, viz. Scripture and experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavoring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, 'that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures; nor could I therefore, allow it to be true, till I found some living witnesses of it.' He replied, 'He could show me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day.' And, accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present sins. They added with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul, who earnestly and per-

severingly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end, —(1.) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. (2.) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me;* a trust in him as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

"I continued thus to seek it, (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coolness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin,) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, Τα μεγιστα ημιν και τιμια επαγγελματα δεδωρηται, ινα δια τουτων γενησθε θειας κοινωνοι φυσεως. '*There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.*' 2 Pet. i, 4. Just as I went out, I opened it again on these words, '*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*' In the afternoon, I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The Anthem was, '*Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee, therefore thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption: And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.*'

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistles to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, *I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for sal-*

vation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

His soul now magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Savior.—Because he was a son, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba Father: The Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God.—The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him.—And he rejoiced in God, by whom he had now received the atonement.

Now that he was a child of God, he brought forth '*the fruit of the Spirit;*' as soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. "Immediately," says he, "I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecated me!" And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind he continued, believing in God, and zealous of good works.

His heart was now enlarged to declare, as he never had before, the loving-kindness of the Lord. "*It was his meat and drink, to do his holy and acceptable will.—The word of God dwelt richly in him,*" and was in his mouth as "*a sharp two edged sword*" to the wicked; but to those who felt the anguish of a "*wounded spirit,*" who had "*turned at God's reproof,*" he was "*an able minister of the New Testament, holding forth the word of life,*" that *they* also might "*rejoice in God their Savior.*"

But he also experienced what it was to be weak in this faith, a little child, according to St. John, as well as afterward to "*be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.*" He was often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him; fear, that he had deceived himself, and stopped short of that grace of God for which he had sought. At other times, letters which he received from injudicious persons concerning the

New-Birth, and the fruits of Christian faith, exceedingly troubled him. Few helped, and many strove (most of them ignorantly) to hinder him: to cause him to cast "*away that confidence which hath great recompense of reward.*" But the Lord, who had "*brought him up out of the horrible pit*" of guilt and unbelief, suffered not his tender new-born spirit to faint before him. He often lifted up his head with joy, and girded him with strength.

He now determined to visit Germany, and in company with Mr. Ingham, embarked at Gravesend, and June 15th, landed at Rotterdam: and on Tuesday the first of August, they arrived at Hernhuth, a settlement of the Moravians, in Upper Lusatia. "Gladly," says he, "would I have spent my life here, but my Master calling me to labor in another part of his vineyard, on Monday, August 14th, 1738, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place." After visiting several places, he arrived at Rotterdam, where he took ship, and sailed for England. He was now strengthened to do and suffer whatever the wise and holy God, whom he "*served with his spirit in the gospel of his Son,*" should permit to come upon him in the prosecution of his great design—of spending his life in testifying the gospel of the grace of God.

Upon Mr. John Wesley's arrival in London, it was his desire to preach in a church, rather than any other place. But this he seldom could do. The same obstructions were in the way that had before shut the doors of so many churches against him. Rather, the offence was now increased: the people flocked to hear him more than ever. Present salvation by faith, which he now preached every where with zeal, though a principal doctrine of the church of England, was little understood, and less approved. But as he had the will, so the Providence of God gave him the means of testifying the Gospel. His own little society was now increased to thirty two persons; and many other religious

communities, in various parts of the town, received him gladly. Newgate was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country also, visited Oxford, and preached to the prisoners in the castle. Being thus, to use St. Paul's words, "*instant in season, and out of season;*" embracing every opportunity that offered, of publicly declaring the truth, and of enforcing it also, in every company, and to every individual with whom he conversed; it could not be, but many reports would be spread concerning him, in every place. The effect, as of old, was "*some said, He is a good man; and others said, nay, but he deceiveth the people: And the multitude was divided.*"

The points he chiefly insisted on were four: FIRST, That orthodoxy, (or right opinions,) is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all: That neither does religion consist in *negatives*, in bare harmlessness of any kind: nor merely in *externals*, doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety, (so called,) or of charity: That it is nothing short of, or different from, "*the mind that was in Christ,*" the image of God, stamped upon the heart, inward righteousness attended with "*the peace of God,*" and "*joy in the Holy Ghost.*"—SECONDLY, That the only way under heaven to this religion, is, to "*repent and believe the Gospel,*" or (as the Apostle words it,) "*repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*"—THIRDLY, That by this faith, "*he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousness:*" He is "*justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.*" —And, LASTLY, That "*being justified by faith,*" we taste of the heaven to which we are going: we are holy and happy: we tread down sin and fear, and "*sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.*"

Many of those who heard this, began to cry out, that he brought strange things to their ears; that this was a doctrine

which they never heard before, or, at least, never regarded. "*They searched the Scriptures, whether these things were so;*" and acknowledged "*the truth as it is in Jesus.*" Their hearts also were influenced, as well as their understandings, and they determined to follow "*Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*"

Hearing that Mr. Whitefield was returned from Georgia, he hastened to London to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other clergymen now united with them, being convinced that the *New Doctrine*, vulgarly called *Methodism*, was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible, and of the church of England.

An instance of the fervency of this little band of Christian soldiers, will not perhaps be unpleasing. Being assembled together with several others on the 1st of January, 1738, they continued in prayer till the night was far spent. "About three in the morning," says he, "the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, '*We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.*'"

To awaken a drowsy, careless world, sunk in sin and sensuality, the Lord at this time was pleased to work in an extraordinary manner. In several places, while Mr. Wesley was expounding the Scriptures, many persons trembled and fell down before him. Some cried aloud, and others appeared convulsed as in the agonies of death. Many of these were afterwards eminent possessors of the holiness and happiness of religion: and declared, that they had at the time above mentioned such a deep sense of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the just wages of it, that they were constrained to cry aloud for the disquietude of their heart. In others the change which the Scripture speaks of, as evidencing a true conversion, was not so apparent; While in some, nei-

ther godly sorrow for sin, peace or joy in believing, nor any real change of heart and life, followed the impressions which were then made upon them.

Mr. Wesley at this time maturely compared these appearances of things with the word of God, and especially with the work of the Spirit of God on the souls of men as described in the word. He thereby clearly saw, that every religious pang, much less any enthusiastic conceit, must not be taken for true conversion. At the same time, he perceived, from several passages both of the Old and New Testament, that the operations of the spirit of God have occasionally produced such lively and powerful actings of the passions of fear, sorrow, joy, and love, as must necessarily have caused at the time considerable agitations of the body. He also knew that several of the Fathers of the church in the three first centuries, spoke often of such a work among the people.*

Nor was he ignorant, that in our own land, since the Reformation, when the violations of the laws of God, the atonement of Christ, and the remission of sins have been preached with "*the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*," such impressions have been made thereby, in innumerable instances, that even the body seemed to fail before them.†

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* The words of the great John Chrysostom are remarkable. Comment on Romans viii, 15. "*Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba Father*"—"This is the first word we utter," says he, "μετα τας θαυμαζας ωδινας εκεινας, και τον ξενον παραδοξον λοχευματων νομον: *after those amazing throes (or birth-pangs,) and that strange and wonderful manner of bringing forth.*"

† The instance of that learned, laborious and successful minister of the church of England, Mr. Bolton, is well known. He was awakened by the preaching of the celebrated Mr. Perkins in the University of Cambridge; and was affected with such terrors, as caused him to throw himself on the ground, and roar with inexpressible anguish; yea, sometimes he lay pale and senseless like one that was dead.

Yet it is certain, that throughout the whole of his life, he wished that all things should be done, even in the opinion of men, decently and in order. But he had only one design, which was to bring men to that knowledge and love of God, which makes them holy and happy: useful in their lives, and peaceful in their death. He therefore thankfully acquiesced in every means which the Lord was pleased to use for the accomplishment of this great end. And when he saw those extraordinary effects accompanied by a godly sorrow for sin, and earnest desires to be delivered from it; when he saw men deeply convinced of the want of a Savior, and this conviction followed by humble loving faith in the Son of God, enabling them to walk worthy of the Lord who had called them to his kingdom and glory, he therein rejoiced: Nor could the imprudent zeal of a few, or the noise and confusion which sometimes attended this extraordinary work, cause him to relax in his efforts to turn men "*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*"

The reasoning of a writer of that day, by no means prejudiced in his favor, is well worthy of consideration. "What influence," says he, "sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body, I pretend not to explain. But I make no question Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction."

About this time, previously to his brother's going to Bristol, they waited on Dr. Gibson, the Bishop of London, to answer the complaints which he had heard alleged against them, respecting their preaching an *absolute assurance of salvation.* Some of the Bishop's words were, "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of

salvation, and acceptable to God, I do not see how any good Christian can be without such an assurance."—They answered. "We do contend for this."*

Tuesday, November 14th, Mr. Charles Wesley had another conference with the Bishop of London, without his brother. He now clearly saw, that a faithful discharge of his duty would expose him to many hardships and dangers; and though he generally had great confidence in God, yet he was fully sensible of his weakness, and that he must be supported in his work by a power not his own. On the 25th of November, at Oxford, he experienced great depression of mind. "I felt," says he, "a pining desire to die, foreseeing the infinite dangers and troubles of life." But, as he was daily engaged in the exercise of some part or other of his ministerial office, "*the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,*" frequently returned upon him; his strength was renewed, and he was again enabled to go on his way rejoicing.

Mr. Whitefield was at this time at Oxford, and was earnest with Mr. C. Wesley to accept a College Living. This shows that no plan of Itinerant preaching was yet thought of: Had any such plan been in agitation among them, it is very certain Mr. Whitefield would not have urged this advice on Mr. C. Wesley, whom he loved as a brother, and whose labors he highly esteemed.

January 5th, 1739, Mr. Wesley gives us another convincing proof that no plan of becoming *Itinerants* was yet formed. He says, "My brother, Mr. Seward, Hall, Whitefield, Ingham, Kinchin, and Hutchins, all set upon me to settle at Oxford."—But he could not agree to their proposal, without being more fully satisfied that it was the order of

* Certainly they did. All *believers*, in their walk with God, must thus examine themselves. But no man was ever *justified* thus: This would be justification by works, which is impossible to a sinner.

Providence. This advice, however, and a similar instance above mentioned, plainly show, that their views at present extended no further than to preach the Gospel in the Churches, wherever they had opportunity.

February 21st, Mr. C. Wesley and his brother thought it prudent to wait on Dr. Potter, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to prevent any ill impressions which the various false reports of their proceedings might produce on his mind. "He showed us," says Mr. C. Wesley, "great affection: Spoke mildly of Mr. Whitefield; cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our defence; to forbear exceptionable phrases; to keep to the doctrines of the Church. We told him we expected persecution would abide by the Church till her Articles and Homilies were repealed. He assured us he knew of no design in the Governors of the church to innovate; and neither should there be any innovation while he lived. He avowed justification by faith alone; and signified his gladness to see us as often as we pleased." The Archbishop also warned them, as Mr. John Wesley informed me, to preach and enforce only the essentials of religion. "Other things," said he, "time and the providence of God only can cure." Mr. Wesley never forgot this.

"March 28th.—We strove to dissuade my brother from going to Bristol, to which he was pressingly invited, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him."

We are now come to the period when those devoted servants of God were called to follow Him in a new and untried way, the way of Itinerancy.

I now proceed to detail the particulars of the call (which Mr. Wesley received through Mr. Whitefield) to Bristol,

which was followed by such remarkable consequences. It appears that Mr. Wesley himself complied with this invitation with great reluctance; and not till he had used every means he could, to know what was the will of the Lord concerning him. His brother Charles, we have seen, was extremely averse to his going there, which seems to have been one cause of his hesitation. Another he himself has often mentioned. He thought much at this time, of death: and as his constitution seemed to him not likely to support itself long under the great and continual labors he was engaged in, he judged it probable that his course was nearly finished. At this time, those fine lines of his friend Mr. Gambold were almost continually in his mind:

Ere long, when Sov'reign wisdom wills,
  My soul an unknown path shall tread,
And strangely leave, who strangely fills
  This frame and waft me to the dead.
O what is death! 'Tis life's last shore,
  Where vanities are vain no more:
Where all pursuits their goal obtain,
  And life is all retouch'd again;
Where, in their bright results, shall rise,
  Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

He did not, therefore, dare to waste a moment, or undertake any employment which he had reason to believe was not agreeable to the will of God. He was, however, at last prevailed on to go, and for this he had cause to praise the Wise Disposer of all things.

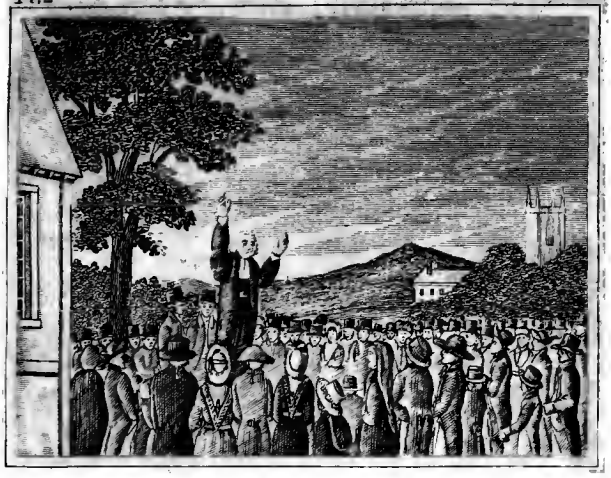
Mr. Whitefield had, a little before, begun to preach in the fields and highways near Bristol; the religious societies, raised up on Dr. Horneck's plan, which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people that crowded to hear him: he, therefore, pressed Mr. Wesley to come and help him. When he arrived, he also began to expound in one of the society-rooms. But being

encouraged by considering the example of our Lord, who preached upon a mountain, and having no place that could contain the multitudes that flocked together, "I submitted," says he, "to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the highways, the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this: [Is it possible any one should be ignorant that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?] "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

It appears that his adopting this way of preaching the Gospel to the poor, was not of choice. "When," says he, "I was told I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there, flocked together when I was at any of the societies; where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain. But after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England, which I had often done in a warmer climate; namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first in Bristol, where the society rooms were exceeding small; and at Kingswood where we had no room at all; afterward, in or near London.

"And I cannot say, I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on Rose-Green, or on the top of Hanham-Mount, some thousands of people were joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

They stood, and under open air adored
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.



Mr. WESLEY
Preaching to a Congregation assembled in the fields.

The FIRST CLASS-MEETING
formed by Methodists was held at Bristol (Eng)

And whether they were listening to his word, with attention still as night; or were lifting up their voices, in praise, as the sound of many waters: Many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, '*How dreadful is this place! This also is no other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!*

"Be pleased to observe, (1.) That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church, (though not by any judicial sentence,) *for preaching such doctrine.* This was the open avowed cause; there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, except that the people crowded so. (2.) That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till after this prohibition. (3.) That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby; nor had I any other end in view than this, to save as many souls as I could. (4.) *Field-preaching* was, therefore, a sudden *expedient*, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen; and, therefore, submitted to, because I thought preaching even *thus* better than *not* preaching *at all:* FIRST, in regard to my own soul, because '*a dispensation of the Gospel being committed to me*,' I did not dare '*not to preach the Gospel.* SECONDLY, in regard to the souls of others, whom I every where saw, '*seeking death in the error of their life.*'"

He still continued to expound in the society-rooms; but it was in the open air that the Lord chiefly wrought by his ministry. Many thousands now attended the word. In the suburbs of Bristol, at Bath, in Kingswood, on Hanham-Mount and Rose-Green, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, and were utterly without God in the world, now fell before the Majesty of heaven, and joyfully acknowledged that "*a prophet was sent among them.*" Cries and tears on every hand frequently drowned his voice, while many exclaimed, in the bitterness of their souls, "*What*

shall I do to be saved?" Not a few of these were soon, (and frequently while he was declaring the willingness of Christ to receive them,) "*filled with peace and joy in believing*," and evidenced that the work was really of God, by holy, happy, and unblamable walking before him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise; and the voice of joy and gladness was found, where wickedness and misery reigned before.

A few here also, in the first instance, and then a greater number, agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen each other, according to the example of the Society in London. Some of these were desirous of building a room large enough to contain not only the Society, but such also as might desire to be present with them when the Scripture was expounded. And on Saturday, the 12th of May, 1739. the first stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

As this was the first preaching-house that was erected. Mr. Wesley has been particular in the relation of some circumstances concerning it. "I had not at first," says he, "the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged, either in the expense of this work, or in the direction of it; having appointed eleven feoffees, on whom, I supposed, these burdens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake: First, with regard to the expense; for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had not I immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen; so that before I knew where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than a hundred and fifty pounds; and this I was to discharge how I could, the subscriptions of both Societies not amounting to one quarter of the sum. And as to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in London, Mr. Whitefield in particular, backed with a message by one just come from thence, that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the

building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all feoffees, and do every thing in my own name. Many reasons they gave for this; but one was enough, viz. 'That such feoffees would always have it in their power to control me, and if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built.' I accordingly yielded to their advice, and calling all the feoffees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instruments made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it. But I knew '*the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof*,' and in his name set out, nothing doubting."

After eight or nine days' absence, in which he came to London, Mr. Wesley returned to Bristol, and continued his labors with increasing success.

Those who have read the accounts of the great revivals of true religion in many parts of Europe, and in our own country in particular, will easily perceive the sameness of those devices of Satan, whereby he perverts the right ways of the Lord. Latimer, as well as Luther, complains of those, who, knowing that we are justified by faith alone, disallow the fruits of faith. It could not be but that the sower of tares would endeavor by every means to overturn this blessed work. Mr. Wesley was now called to oppose three grand deceptions of the enemy of souls: (1st.) Antinomianism, the making void the law through faith: (2dly.) Unscriptural stillness, the neglect of the ordinances of the Gospel, particularly, prayer, hearing and reading the Scriptures, and the Lord's supper: (3dly.) Attention to dreams, visions, and men's own imaginations and feelings, without bringing them to the only sure test, the oracles of God.

He now labored in many places between London and Bristol. In Moorfields, on Kennington-Common, Blackheath, &c., many thousands attended his ministry. In ev-

ery place God bore witness to his truth: Multitudes were convinced, that "*the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ:*" and they brought forth fruit meet for repentance; and not a few found "*redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of their sins.*"

Various and strange were the reports concerning him. As Jeremiah, he could say, "*I heard the defaming of many. Report, said they, and we will report it again.*" The most common rumor was that he was a Jesuit, and had evil designs against the Church, if not against the State. Various were the publications concerning him. Most of these lived but a few days or weeks, the writers being totally ignorant of the subject they wrote on. Some of them however were worthy of notice, which he answered with great ability, as will appear in the review of his writings.

His mother now began to attend his ministry, being convinced that he spoke the words of truth and soberness. She had for some time lived with her son-in-law Mr. Hall, and by misrepresentations, had been led to think that her sons John and Charles were in a dangerous error. Her son Samuel, who was deeply prejudiced against his brother's preaching and conduct, laments with great surprise, in a letter to his mother, written about this time, that "she should countenance the spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation." But Mr. Wesley solves this difficulty. "Monday, September 3d," says he, "I talked largely with my mother, who told me, that, till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned, as the having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: Much less did she imagine, that this was the common privilege of all true believers. 'Therefore,' said she, 'I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee*; the words

struck through my heart, and I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all my sins.'

"I asked, whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith? And, whether she had not heard him preach it to others? She answered, 'He had it himself, and declared, a little before his death, that, for more than forty years, he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all, of his being *accepted in the beloved.*' But that nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no not once, explicitly upon it; whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few, not as promised to all the people of God." After this she lived with Mr. John Wesley, and joyfully attended his ministry, till God called her to a better world. I shall have occasion to speak more of this excellent woman.

A serious clergyman, convinced of his uprightness, but yet staggered at a conduct which he thought contrary to the interests of the Established Church, desired to know in what points he differed from the Church of England? "I answered," says Mr. Wesley, "to the best of my knowledge, in none: The doctrines we preach are the doctrines of the Church of England: Indeed the fundamental doctrines of the Church, clearly laid down in her prayers, articles, and homilies.

"He asked, in what points then do you differ from the other clergy of the Church of England? I answered, In none from that part of the clergy who adhere to the doctrines of the Church: but from that part of the clergy who dissent from the Church, (though they own it not,) I differ in the points following:

"First, They speak of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.

"SECONDLY, They speak of our own holiness or good works, as the cause of our justification; or, that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God. I believe, neither our own holiness, nor good works, are any part of the cause of our justification: but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it; or, that *for the sake of which, on account of which*, we are justified before God.

"THIRDLY, They speak of good works, as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe no good work can be previous to justification, nor consequently a condition of it; but that we are justified, (being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work,) by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work.

"FOURTHLY, They speak of sanctification (or holiness) as if it were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in these two points, (1.) The doing no harm, (2.) The doing good, (as it is called,) i. e. The using the means of grace, and helping our neighbor.

"I believe it to be an inward thing, namely, *The life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the Divine Nature; the mind that was in Christ;* or, *The renewal of our heart after the image of Him that created us.*

"LASTLY, They speak of the *New Birth*, as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism: or at most a change from *outward wickedness* to *outward goodness*: from a vicious to (what is called) a virtuous life. I believe it to be an inward thing; a change from inward wickedness to inward goodness: An entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the devil, (wherein we were born) to the image of God: A change from the love of the creature to the love of the Creator, from earthly and sensual, to heavenly and holy affections; in a word, a change from the tempers of the spirits of darkness, to those of the angels of God in heaven.

"There is therefore a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcileable difference between us: So that if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind."

Religion now made a rapid progress; societies were formed in many places, and even at a considerable distance. The laborers as yet were few, but, believing they were engaged in the cause of God against ignorance and profaneness, which overspread the land, they were indefatigable, scarcely giving themselves any rest day or night. The effects of their preaching made much noise, which at length roused some of the sleeping watchmen of Israel; not indeed to inquire after the truth, and amend their ways, but to crush these irregular proceedings, that they might quietly sleep again. These opponents, however, had more zeal against Methodism, than knowledge of it. They attacked it with nothing but idle stories, misrepresentations of facts, and gross falsehoods. They retailed these from the pulpits, and published them from the press, with little regard to *moderation*, *charity*, or even *decency*.

Mr. Wesley knew in whom he had believed, and in the midst of abuse, poured out upon him by friends and enemies, went on his way as if he heard not.

After a short visit to London, he again returned to Bristol. October 15. Upon a pressing invitation, he set out for Wales. The churches were here also shut against him, as in England, and he preached in private houses, or in the open air, to a willing people. "I have seen," says he, "no part of England so pleasant for sixty or seventy miles together, as those parts of Wales I have been in: and most of the inhabitants are indeed '*ripe for the Gospel.*' I mean, if the expression seems strange, they are *earnestly desirous* of being instructed in it; and as *utterly ignorant* of it they are, as any Creek or Cherokee Indians. I do not mean

they are ignorant of the name of Christ: many of them can say both the Lord's Prayer and the Belief. Nay, and some all the Catechism: But take them out of the road of what they had learned by rote, and they know no more, (nine or ten of those with whom I conversed,) either of Gospel salvation, or of that faith whereby alone we can be saved, than Chicali, or Tomo Chachi. Now what spirit is he of, who had rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge, than that they should be saved, even by the exhortations of Howell Harris, or an Itinerant preacher!" The word did not fall to the ground. Many however, '*repented and believed the Gospel.*' And some united together to strengthen each other's hand in God, and to provoke one another to love and to good works.

During this time, Mr. C. Wesley, having also got rid of his scruples of preaching out of a church, united with his brother in *seeking* as well as *saving* the lost.

July 4th, Mr. C. Wesley returned to London. On the 8th, he preached to near ten thousand hearers, by computation, in Moorfields, and the same day at Kennington Common. His labors now daily increased upon him; and his success, in bringing great numbers from darkness to light, and in rousing the minds of vast multitudes to a serious inquiry after religion, was beyond any thing we can, at present easily conceive. Yet he was far from being elated, as a hypocrite would certainly have been, but felt the full force of the temptations which arose from the success of his ministry.—July 22d, he says, "Never till now, did I know the strength of temptation and energy of sin. Who, that consults only the quiet of his own mind, would covet great success! I live in a continual storm; my soul is always in my hand; the enemy thrusts sore at me, that I may fall, and a worse enemy than the devil is my own heart. *Miror quemquam prædicatorem salvari.** The only remedy for these

* I wonder any preacher of the Gospel is saved.

painful, and oftentimes weakening feelings, is an increase of faith."

He now met his little society at his preaching-house near Moorfields, which was generally known by the name of the Foundery, because it was originally built for the casting of cannon. In this place he also regularly preached. His word was owned of God, and his Society rapidly increased. He therefore now saw it necessary to draw up, jointly with his brother, rules for his Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and other parts of the kingdom; and as they contain as fine a system of Christian ethics, as ever was perhaps drawn up in so small a compass, and have been the rules by which, since that time, the whole Connection has been governed, I think it my indispensable duty to give them a place in the present history.

The Nature, Design, and General Rules of our United Societies.

(1.) In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, (as did two or three more the next day,) that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together; which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on *Thursday* in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their meeting with prayer, suited to their several necessities.*

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* See plate 2, p. 84.

(2.) This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in *Europe* and then in *America*. Such a society is no other than "*a company of men* having the form and seeking the power of *godliness*, *united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*"

(3.) That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class: one of whom is styled *The Leader.*—It is his duty,

I. To see each person in his class once a week at least: in order,

1. To inquire how their souls prosper:

2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require:

3. To receive what they are willing to give, towards the relief of the preachers, church, and poor.*

II. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week; in order,

1. To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

2. To pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

(4.) There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who

* This part refers to towns and cities; where the poor are generally numerous, and church expenses considerable.

continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced: such as,

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness; or drinking spiritous liquors, unless in cases of necessity.

The *buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them.*

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother *going to law* with brother; returning evil for evil; or railing for railing; the *using many words* in buying or selling.

The *buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.*

The *giving or taking things on usury*, i. e. unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or *unprofitable* conversation: particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as,

The *putting on of gold and costly apparel.*

The *taking such diversions* as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The *singing* those *songs*, or *reading* those *books*, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness and needless self-indulgence;

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

(5.) It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible, to all men;

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good, unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, *and them only.*

By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily:* submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say *all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake*

(6.) It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God: such are,

The public worship of God:

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded:

The Supper of the Lord:

Family and private prayer:

Searching the Scriptures, and

Fasting or abstinence.

(7.) These are the general rules of our societies: all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among

us who observe them not who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul, as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

Mr. Wesley now went on with his labors, and with the same success. Multitudes, as before, attended his ministry, and many, renouncing ungodliness, were brought into the liberty of the Gospel. Many also were the witnesses, who, after patiently suffering the afflictions which the Lord was pleased to lay upon them, resigned their souls into the hands of God, with triumphant praise and joy.

For a considerable time Mr. Whitefield continued to labor in union with him; and sometimes they appeared in the pulpit together. Mr. Whitefield, on his second visit to America, was well received by many pious ministers in the northern states. Almost all these were of Mr. Calvin's sentiments, and asserted absolute Predestination. Mr. Whitefield, being edified by their piety, began in a little time to relish their creed. They strongly recommended to him the writings of the Puritan divines, which he from that time read with much pleasure, approving all he found therein, as he informs Mr. Wesley in a letter which he wrote to him on the subject. The consequence was, that on his return to England, he could not join his old friend in the work of the ministry, with the same cordiality as before.

As Mr. Wesley fully believed, and firmly asserted, that "*God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved,*" he had now another error to oppose. The Calvinistic sentiments had been long held by a great part of the dissenting congregations, but did not appear for some time among those who were converted in the present revival of religion. This however was not of long continuance.

"One evening," says Mr. Wesley, "Mr. Acourt complained, that Mr. Nowers had hindered his going into the Society. Mr. Nowers answered, it was by Mr. C. Wesley's order. 'What,' says Mr. A——, 'do you refuse admitting a person into your Society, only because he differs from you in opinion?'—I answered, No. But what opinion do you mean?—He said, 'That of election. I hold a certain number is elected from eternity. And these must and shall be saved. And the rest of mankind must and shall be damned. And many of your Society hold the same.'—I replied, I never asked whether they held it or no. Only let them not trouble others by disputing about it.—He said, 'Nay, but I *will* dispute about it.'—What, wherever you come?—'Yes, wherever I come.'—Why then would you come among us, who you know are of another mind?—'Because you are all wrong, and I am resolved to set you all right.'—I fear your coming, with this view, would neither profit you nor us.—He concluded, 'Then I will go and tell all the world, that you and your brother are false prophets. And I tell you, in one fortnight you will all be in confusion.'"

Soon after this, the copy of a letter, written by Mr. Whitefield to Mr. Wesley, was printed without the permission of either, and great numbers of copies were given to the people, both at the door of the Foundery and in the house itself. Mr. Wesley having procured one of them, related (after preaching) the naked fact to the congregation, and told them, "I will do just what I believe Mr. Whitefield would, were he here himself." Upon which, he tore it in pieces before them all. Every one who had received it, did the same: So that, in two minutes, there was not a whole copy left. "Ah, poor Ahithophel!" added Mr. Wesley,

"Ibi, omnis effusus labor!"—There, all your labor's lost!

Several letters passed between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield, on the Calvinistic question. In Mr. Whitefield's last, he says, "I thank you for your kind answer to my last. Dear Sir, who would be troubled with a party spirit? May our Lord make all his children free from it indeed!"

From this time, their mutual regard and friendly intercourse suffered no interruption till Mr. Whitefield's death, who says, in his last will, written with his own hand, about six months before he died, "I leave a mourning-ring to my honored and dear friends, and disinterested fellow laborers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."*—When the news of Mr. Whitefield's death reached London, Mr. Keen, one of his executors, recollecting he had often said to him, "If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend the Rev. Mr. John Wesley?" And having constantly received for answer, "He is the man," Mr. Keen accordingly waited on Mr. Wesley, and engaged him to preach it; which he did, and bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, the ardent zeal, and the extensive usefulness, of his much loved and honored friend.†

As the people who placed themselves under his care, daily increased, he was involved in a considerable difficulty: Either he must confine his labors to those whom he could visit constantly, or within a short space of time, or endeavor to procure some other assistance for them. It seems, at first, he had some hopes that the Ministers of the respective parishes would watch over those who were lately turned from the error of their ways. In this, however, he

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* See Robert's Life of Whitefield, page 256.

† Ibid. page 230. Mr. Whitefield died in September, 1770.

was disappointed, which induced him to try other methods; and, at last, drew forth that defense of himself, which he makes in the third part of his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion."

"It pleased God," says Mr. Wesley, "by two or three Ministers of the Church of England, to call many sinners to repentance; who, in several parts, were undeniably turned from a course of sin to a course of holiness.

"The Ministers of the places where this was done, ought to have received those Ministers with open arms; and to have taken those persons who had just begun to serve God, into their particular care; watching over them in tender love, lest they should fall back into the snare of the devil.

"Instead of this, the greater part spoke of those Ministers, as if the devil, not God had sent them. Some repelled them from the Lord's table; others stirred up the people against them, representing them, even in their public discourses, as *fellows not fit to live; Papists, heretics, traitors; conspirators* against their *King* and *country.*

"And how did they watch over the sinners lately reformed? Even as a leopard watcheth over his prey. They drove some of them from the Lord's Table; to which, till now, they had no desire to approach. They preached all manner of evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the name of the Lord. They turned many out of their work, persuaded others to do so too, and harassed them in all manner of ways.

"The event was, that some were wearied out, and so turned back to the vomit again: and then these good pastors gloried over them, and endeavored to shake others by their example.

"When the Ministers, by whom God had helped them before, came again to those places, great part of their work was to begin again, if it could be begun again; but the relapsers were often so hardened in sin, that no impression could be made upon them.

"What could they do in case of so extreme necessity, where so many souls lay at stake?

"No clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was, to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God; and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation."

With this view, Mr. Wesley had formerly appointed Mr. Cennick, to reside at Kingswood. But the want of an assistant of this kind was particularly felt in London. The Society in that city had recently and deeply experienced the mischievous effects of that instruction, which is not according to the oracles of God: And, therefore, when he was about to leave London for a season, he appointed one whom he judged to be strong in the faith, and of an exemplary conversation, to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them, and give them such advice as might be needful. This was Mr. Maxfield, one of the first-fruits of his ministry at Bristol. This young man, being fervent in spirit, and *mighty in the Scriptures*, greatly profited the people. They crowded to hear him; and, by the increase of their number, as well as by their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go further than he had at first designed. He began to *preach*, and the Lord so blessed the word, that many were not only deeply awakened and brought to repentance, but were also made happy in a consciousness of pardon. The Scripture marks of true conversion,—inward peace, and power to walk in all holiness, —evinced the work to be of God.

Some, however, were offended at this *irregularity*, as it was termed. A complaint was made in form to Mr. Wesley, and he hastened to London, in order to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house, adjoining to the Foun-

dery. When he arrived, she perceived that his countenance was expressive of dissatisfaction, and inquired the cause.— "Thomas Maxfield," said he, abruptly, "has turned Preacher, I find." She looked attentively at him, and replied, "John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favoring readily any thing of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself." He did so. His prejudices bowed before the force of truth, and he could only say, "*It is the Lord: Let him do what seemeth to him good.*"

In other places also, the same assistance was afforded. It appears, indeed, from what he has said at various times, that he only *submitted with reluctance to it.* His High Church Principles stood in his way. But such effects were produced, that he frequently found himself in the predicament of Peter; who, being questioned in a matter somewhat similar, could only relate the fact and say, "*What was I, that I could withstand God ?*"

But the Lord was about to show him still greater things than these. An honest man, a mason, of Birstal in Yorkshire, whose name was John Nelson, coming up to London to work at his trade, heard *that word* which he found to be the "*power of God unto salvation.*" Nelson had full business in London and large wages. But, from the time of his finding peace with God, it was continually on his mind that he must return to his native place. He did so, about Christmas, in the year 1740. His relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire, "What he thought of this new faith ? And whether he believed there was any such thing, as a man's knowing that his sins were forgiven ?" John told them point-blank, "that this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the Gospel; and that he himself was as sure his sins were forgiven, as he could be of the

shining of the sun." This was soon noised abroad; and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof of the great truths, which such inquiries naturally let him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare, and enforce, several parts of Scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased, so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do in the evening, as soon as he came from work. God immediately set his seal to what was spoken; and several believed, and therefore declared, that God was merciful also to their unrighteousness, and had forgiven all their sins.

Here was a Preacher, and a large congregation, many of whom were happy partakers of the faith of the Gospel, raised up without the direct interference of Mr. Wesley. He, therefore, now fully acquiesced in *the order of God*, and rejoiced that *the thoughts of God were not as his* confined *thoughts*. His mind was enlarged with the love of God and man; and he determined, more firmly than ever, to spend and be spent for the glory of his name. Nelson's Journal was afterwards published, and is now extant. And it is hard to say which is most to be admired,—the strength of his understanding, unassisted by human learning,—his zeal for the salvation of souls,—or the injuries and oppressions which he suffered from those who "*knew not what spirit they were of.*"

Mr. Wesley visited this good man at his earnest request, and from that time labored much in Yorkshire. In no part of England has religion taken a deeper root, or had a wider spread, than in this favored county. The people, who are numerous, are also industrious, and, in general, fully employed. They have learned to be "*diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*" Not only in all the capital towns, but in all the villages also, numerous

Societies were formed; and Christian fellowship, till then unknown, has given to religion a stability and beauty, which can hardly be conceived by those who know it not.

Mr. Maxfield was now regularly employed in the work. He was remarkably useful, and excited the astonishment of those who heard him. The late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon was, at this time and for many years after, exceedingly attached to Mr. Wesley, and very frequently wrote to him. She heard Mr. Maxfield expound, and in a letter to Mr. Wesley, speaks thus of him: "I never mentioned to you that I have seen Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favor that I know. He has raised from the stones, one to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. How is God's power shown in weakness! You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favored of the Lord. The first time I made him expound, expecting little from him. I sat over against him, and thought what a power of God must be with him, to make me give any attention to him. But before he had gone over one-fifth part, any one that had been me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone. so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him.—The society goes on well here. Live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus."

Mr. Wesley's letter to his brother Charles, seems to have thoroughly roused him. Accordingly on August 16th, having shaken off his depression, he entered fully on the Itinerant plan. He rode to Wickham, and being denied the church, would have preached in a private house: but Mr. Bowers having been there preaching in the streets, had raised great opposition, and effectually shut the door against him. The next day he went to Oxford, and the day following reached Evesham. After being here two or three days, he wrote to his brother as follows.

"August 25th.—Before I went into the streets and highways, I sent, according to my custom, to borrow the use of the church. The minister, being one of the better disposed, sent back a civil message; 'that he would be glad to drink a glass of wine with me, but durst not lend me his pulpit for fifty guineas.' Mr. Whitefield,* however, durst lend me his field, which did just as well. For near an hour and a half, God gave me voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners to repent and believe the Gospel. Being invited to Painswick, I waited upon the Lord, and renewed my strength. We found near a thousand persons gathered in the street. I discoursed from, '*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.*' I besought them earnestly to be reconciled, and the rebels seemed inclined to lay down their arms. A young Presbyterian teacher cleaved to us."

Sunday, June 22d, I went [again] to learn Christ among our colliers, and drank into their spirit. We rejoiced for the consolation. O that some of our London brethren would but come to school to Kingswood! These *are* what they of London *pretend* to be. God knows their poverty; but they are rich, and daily entering into his rest. They do not hold it necessary to deny weak faith, in order to get strong. Their souls truly wait upon God in his ordinances. Ye many masters, come learn Christ of these outcasts; for know, that *except ye be converted*, and *become like* these *little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* I met several of those whom I had baptized, and found them growing in grace.

"July 27.—I heard a miserable sermon," says Mr. C. Wesley, "at Temple-Church, recommending religion as the most likely way to raise a fortune. After sermon, proclamation was made, that all should depart who were not of

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* Brother of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield.

the parish. While the shepherd was driving away the lambs, I staid, suspecting nothing, till the clerk came to me and said, 'Mr. Beacher bids you go away, for he will not give you the sacrament.' I went to the vestry door, and mildly desired Mr. Beacher to admit me. He asked, 'Are you of this parish?' I answered, Sir, you see that I am a clergyman. Then, dropping his first pretence, he charged me with rebellion, in expounding the Scripture without authority; and said in express words, 'I repel you from the sacrament.' I replied, I cite you to answer this, before JESUS CHRIST, at the day of judgment. This enraged him above measure; he called out, '*Here, take away this man.*' The constables had been ordered to attend, I suppose, lest the colliers should take the sacrament by force! but I saved them the trouble of taking away '*this man*,' and quietly retired."—These things are but poor evidences, that the Bristol ministers were at that time the true successors of the apostles!

"Friday, May 28, 1742.—We came to Newcastle about six in the evening, and after a short refreshment, walked into the town. I was surprised; so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, (even from the mouths of little children,) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for Him, who '*came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*'

"*Sunday*, 30.—At seven I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town; and standing at the end of the street with John Taylor,* began to sing the hundredth psalm. Three or four people came to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose, there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching; to whom I applied those

* A good man, who traveled with him at that time.

solemn words, '*He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes we are healed.*'

"Observing the people, when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them, 'If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again.'

"At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields or on Kennington Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear; and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, '*I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.*' After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came: but several were got to our inn before me, by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days; or, however, one day more. But I could not consent, having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

He now also visited Epworth, his native place, where his father had been rector of the parish for many years, and had borne a faithful testimony, though almost all the seed seemed to have been sown as "*by the high-way side.*" "It being many years," says he, "since I had been in Epworth before, I went to an inn, in the middle of the town, not knowing whether there were any left in it now who would not be ashamed of my acquaintance. But an old servant of my father, with two or three poor women, presently found me out. I asked her, Do you know any in Epworth who

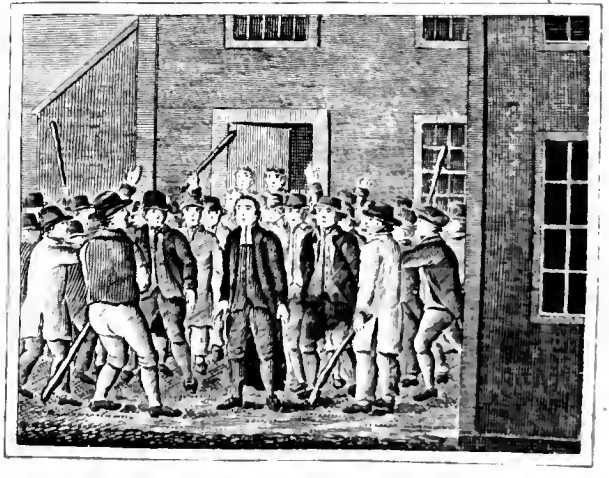
are in earnest to be saved? She answered, 'I am by the grace of God; and I know *I am saved through faith.*' I asked, Have you then the peace of God? Do you know that he has forgiven your sins? She replied, 'I thank God. I know it well; and many here can say the same thing.'"

Mr. Wesley proceeds, "Sunday, June 6, 1742.—A little before the service began, I went to Mr. Romley, the curate, and offered to assist him either by preaching or reading prayers: but he did not choose to accept of my assistance. The church was exceedingly full in the afternoon, a rumor being spread that I was to preach. But the sermon, on '*Quench not the Spirit*,' was not suitable to the expectation of many of the hearers. Mr. Romley told them, 'One of the most dangerous ways of quenching the Spirit was by enthusiasm;' and enlarged on the character of an enthusiast in a very florid and oratorical manner. After sermon, John Taylor stood in the churchyard, and gave notice as the people were coming out, 'Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o'clock.' Accordingly, at six I came, and found such a congregation as I believe Epworth never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father's tomb-stone, and cried, '*The Kingdom of Heaven is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*'"

He continues, "*Friday, 11th.*—I preached again at Epworth, on Ezekiel's vision of the resurrection of the dry bones. And great indeed was the shaking among them: Lamentation and great mourning were heard; God bowed their hearts, so that on every side, as with one accord, they lifted up their voice and wept aloud. Surely he who sent his Spirit to breathe upon them, will hear their cry and help them.

"*Saturday, 12th.*—I preached on *the righteousness of the law*, and *the righteousness of faith.* While I was speaking, several dropped down as dead; and among the rest such a

JOHN WESLEY
Preaching on his father's grave 1742



Mr. WESLEY,
Passing through a ferocious Mob

cry was heard, of sinners groaning for '*the righteousness of faith*,' as almost drowned my voice. But many of these soon lifted up their heads with joy and broke out into thanksgiving; being assured, they now had the desire of their soul, the forgiveness of their sins.

"I observed a gentleman there, who was remarkable for not pretending to be of any religion at all. I was informed he had not been at public worship of any kind for upwards of thirty years. Seeing him stand as motionless as a statue, I asked him abruptly, 'Sir, are you a sinner?' He replied with a deep and broken voice, 'Sinner enough!' and continued staring upwards, till his wife, and a servant or two, who were all in tears, put him into a chaise, and carried him home.

"*Sunday* 13*th*.—At six, I preached for the last time in Epworth church-yard, (being to leave the town the next morning,) to a vast multitude gathered together from all parts, on the beginning of our Lord's sermon on the Mount. I continued among them for near three hours: and yet we scarce knew how to part. O let none think his labor of love is lost, because the fruit does not immediately appear! Near forty years did my father labor here: But he saw little fruit of all his labor. I took some pains among this people too; and my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town, on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since, now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

On another visit to Epworth, he observes, "Sunday, January 2d, 1743.—At five, I preached on, '*So is every one who is born of the Spirit*.' About eight, I preached from my father's tomb, on Heb. viii, 11. Many from the neighboring towns, asked, 'If it would not be well, as it was Sacrament Sunday, for them to receive it?'—I told them, by all means. But it would be more respectable first, to ask Mr. Romley,

the curate's leave. One did so in the name of the rest; to whom he said, 'Pray tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give *him* the sacrament; for he is not fit.'

"How wise a God is our God! There could not have been so fit a place, under heaven, where this should befall me first, as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where, *according to the strictest sect of our religion*, I had so long *lived a Pharisee!* It was also fit in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table, where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life, should be one who owed his all in this world, to the tender love which my father had shown to his, as well as personally to himself."*

On a subsequent visit to Newcastle, where his brother Charles had been preaching some weeks before, with great success, a society was formed. The next morning Mr. Wesley began to preach at five o'clock, a thing unheard of in those parts, till he introduced the practice; which he did every where, if there was any probability that a few persons could be gathered to hear him. On the 18th, he says, "I could not but observe the different manner wherein God is pleased to work in different places. The grace of God flows here, with a wider stream than it did at first either at Bristol, or Kingswood. But it does not sink so deep as it did there. Few are thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarce any can witness, that the Lamb of God has taken away their sins. I never saw," says he, "a work of God in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rises step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as hath frequently been done at Bristol or London; but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls. I saw none in the triumph of faith, which has

* I have documents before me which abundantly prove this.

been so common in other places. But the believers go on calm and steady. Let God do as seemeth him good."

Dec. 20th.—Having obtained a piece of ground, forty yards in length, to build a house for their meetings and public worship, they laid the first stone of the building. It being computed, that such a house as was proposed, could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all. "I was of another mind," says Mr. Wesley, "nothing doubting, but as it was begun for God's sake, he would provide what was needful for the finishing of it."

Mr. Wesley informed me, that he had one pound six shillings when he undertook to build the preaching-house at Newcastle, at that time the largest in England. Soon after he began, he received a letter from a pious Quaker, (who had heard of the work at Newcastle,) in the following terms: —"Friend Wesley, I have had a dream concerning thee. I thought I saw thee surrounded with a large flock of sheep, which thou didst not know what to do with. My first thought after I awoke was, that it was thy flock at Newcastle, and that thou hadst no house of worship for them. I have enclosed a note for one hundred pounds, which may help thee to provide a house."—The building rose by supplies received from time to time, like Professor Francke's at Halle, and Mr. Wesley called it by the same name,—"The Orphan House."

While Mr. Wesley thus went on in the work of the Lord, the spurious works of man sometimes encountered him. Having received a letter pressing him to go without delay into Leicestershire, he set out. "The next afternoon," says he, "I stopped a little at Newport-Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was

quite uneasy to know, 'Whether I held the doctrine of the *decrees* as he did.' But I told him over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer: told me, I was rotten at heart; and supposed I was of John Wesley's followers. I told him, No, I am John Wesley himself. Upon which he appeared,

> *Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem*
> *Pressit*———

'*As one who had unawares trodden on a snake*:' And would gladly have run away outright. But being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavored to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton."

As the various societies now began to walk by rule, and to be trained up in the discipline as well as the doctrines of the Lord, I shall here give a circumstantial account of *the discipline* which was gradually introduced among them: only observing, that there was no previous design or plan at all, but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. And as this is so delicate and so important a part of Mr. Wesley's Life, and of the History of that revival of religion, in which he was the chief instrument, I shall give the relation in his own words.

With regard to the formation of the Societies, he observes, "It quickly appeared, that their thus uniting together answered the end proposed. In a few months the far greater part of those who had begun to '*fear God and work righteousness*,' but were not united together, grew faint in their minds, and fell back into what they were before. Meanwhile the far greater part of those who were thus united together continued '*striving to enter in at the straight gate*, and '*to lay hold on eternal life*.'

"But as much as we endeavored to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not *live the Gospel.* I know not, that any hypocrites were crept in; for indeed there was no temptation. But several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived, that there were many ill consequences of suffering these to remain among us. It was dangerous to others; inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a scandal on their brethren as exposed them to what was not properly '*the reproach of Christ.*' It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil-spoken of.

"We groaned under these inconveniences long before a remedy could be found. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol concerning the means of paying the debts there; when one stood up and said, 'Let every member of the Society give a *penny* a week till all are paid.' Another answered, 'But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.' 'Then,' said he, 'put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well. I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.' It was done. In a while some of these informed me, 'they found such and such a one did not live as he ought.' It struck me immediately, 'This is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long.' I called together all the leaders of the classes, (so we used to term them and their companies,) and desired, that each would make a particular inquiry into the behavior of those whom he saw weekly: They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their

ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear and rejoiced unto God with reverence.

"As soon as possible the same method was used in London and all other places. Evil men were detected, and reproved. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared, that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced, that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the Society.

"About this time, I was informed, that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the School, and, (when they could spare the time,) spent the greater part of the night in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this; but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians,* I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed, it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them, on the Friday nearest the full-moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and, withal, that I intended to preach; desiring, they and they only would meet me there, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday, abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine; and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

"This we have continued to do once a month ever since, in Bristol, London, and Newcastle, as well as Kingswood. And exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: It has generally been an extremely solemn season: when

* The Vigils, or Eves of particular days, mentioned in our book of Common Prayer, were such Watch-nights.

the word of God sunk deep into the hearts, even of those who, till then, knew him not. If it be said, 'This was only owing to the novelty of the thing, (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons,) or, perhaps, to the awful silence of the night; I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: However, the impression then made on many souls has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.

"Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture, that, either by the novelty of this *ancient* custom, or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to '*save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins*,' am I clear before God, if I do it not?—if I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?

"As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this, I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their Leaders and neighbors, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? At these seasons, I likewise particularly inquire, whether there be any misunderstanding or differences among them? that every hinderance of peace and brotherly love may be taken out of the way.

"To each of those, of whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose; every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given, as if I had wrote at length, 'I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God and works righteousness.'

"Those who bore these tickets, (these Συμβολα, or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them; being of just the same force with the επιστολαι συστατικαι, *commendatory letters*, mentioned by the Apostle;) wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all chcerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished when the Society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation; (for so often the tickets are changed;) and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of this community."

Upon his return from Yorkshire, Mr. Wesley spent some time in and near Bristol. He then revisited London, where he arrived on Tuesday, July 20th, 1742, being hastened by the account of his mother's illness. He found her on the borders of eternity, free from all doubt and fear, and from every desire, but (as soon as God should call,) "*to depart and to be with Christ.*"

But I must give Mr. Wesley's own account of this affecting occurrence.—"Friday, July 30th, about three in the afternoon, I went to my mother, and found her change was near. I sat down on the bed-side. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but, I believe, quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four, the silver cord was loosening, and the wheel breaking at the cistern; and then without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, the soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, 'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.'

"*Sunday, August* 1.—Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon I

committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of Scripture from which I afterward spoke, was, '*I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened:—And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*' It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side of eternity.

"We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:

"Here lies the body of Mrs. SUSANNAH WESLEY, the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. SAMUEL ANNESLEY.

"In sure and steadfast hope to rise,
And claim her mansion in the skies,
A Christian here her flesh laid down,
The cross exchanging for a crown.

"True daughter of affliction, she,
Inur'd to pain and misery,
Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,
A legal night of seventy years.

"The father then reveal'd his son,
Him in the broken bread made known:
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,
And found the earnest of her heaven.

"Meet for the fellowship above,
She heard the call, 'Arise, my love!'
'I come,' her dying looks replied,
And lamb-like, as her Lord she died."

Some gentlemen have considered this epitaph in the usual style of criticism, and have seemed insensible to its excellence. However qualified such may be to judge of poetry

in general, the poetry of Mr. Charles Wesley seems really too high for them. To me, not wholly unacquainted with the art, this epitaph has always appeared inexpressibly beautiful, and highly characteristic. It is *simple, pure, unlabored;* and has all that elevation, and yet sobriety, of spirit, which as Christian believers, we expect to find in those who have "*tasted the powers of the world to come.*" Mr. John Wesley, a most excellent judge of poetry, would not have suffered it to pass, if it were not worthy both of the author and the subject. The "plain stone" too, with the absence of all decoration in the account, is highly in character. *The praise of a Christian is not of man; but, of God.* The brothers could not forget this, for they lived in the whole spirit of it. Such were all Mr. Wesley's accounts of his departed friends and fellow-laborers. Those concerning Mr. Fletcher, and his own beloved brother Charles, did not together make up ten lines.

Mr. Wesley having now several helpers after his own heart, the work of God prospered in many places. Many societies were formed in Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and in several parts of Yorkshire. And those in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, were much increased.

But as in the beginning of Christianity, so it was now: *This sect was every where spoken against.* But its enemies were not content with this. In the year 1740, several rioters, who had long disturbed the meetings in Bristol, were emboldened by impunity. Their numbers also increased, so as to fill not only the court before the preaching-house, but a considerable part of the street. The mayor sent them orders to disperse; but they set him at defiance. He then despatched several of his officers, who took the ringleaders into custody. The next day they were brought into court, it being the time of the quarter-sessions. There they re-

ceived a severe reprimand; and from that time the society in Bristol enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace.

In London the rioters were not so easily subdued. They assembled at various places, and frequently treated Mr. Wesley and many of his serious hearers in a shameful manner. They followed them with showers of stones, and once attempted to unroof the Foundery, where the congregation was assembled, and had nearly accomplished their design. The common cry was, "You may treat them as you please, for there is no law for them." But Sir John Ganson, the chairman of the Middlesex justices, called on Mr. Wesley and informed him "that he had no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest them:" adding, "Sir, I and the other Middlesex magistrates have *orders from above* to do you justice whenever you apply to us." A short time after he did apply. Justice was done, though not with rigor; and from that period the society had peace in London. It was very confidently stated, in that day, that when the question concerning the persecutions suffered by the societies at this time, came before the council, the king declared, that "no man in his dominions should be persecuted on the account of religion while he sat on the throne." His late majesty also, and indeed all that dynasty, have acted on the same principle.

A remarkable circumstance, which Mr. Wesley related to me, may throw considerable light on those "orders from above." One of the original society of Methodists at Oxford, on the departure of its founders from the university, after seeking for others like-minded, at length joined the society of Quakers and settled at Kew. Being a man of considerable property, and of exemplary behavior, he was much respected and favored with free permission to walk in the royal gardens. Here he frequently met the king, who conversed freely with him, and with much apparent satisfaction. Upon one of those occasions his majesty, knowing

that he had been at Oxford, inquired if he knew the Messrs. Wesley, adding, "They make a great noise in the nation." The gentleman replied, "I know them well, King George: and thou mayest be assured that thou hast not two better men in thy dominions, nor men that love thee better, than John and Charles Wesley." He then proceeded to give some account of their principles and conduct; with which the king seemed much pleased.—When Mr. Wesley had concluded, I said, "We see, sir, the Lord can bring a tale to the ear of the king." He replied, with much feeling, "O, I have always found the blessedness of a *single eye*.—of leaving all to Him."

However, the rioters in the country, particularly in Staffordshire, were not so easily quelled. In the beginning of 1743, Mr. Wesley visited Wednesbury, and preached in the town-hall morning and evening, and also in the open air. He likewise visited the parts adjacent, and more especially those which were inhabited by colliers. Many appeared to be deeply affected, and about a hundred desired to join together. In two or three months, these were increased to between three and four hundred, and upon the whole enjoyed much peace. But in the summer following there was an entire change. Mr. Egginton, the minister of Wednesbury, with several neighboring justices of the peace, stirred up the basest of the people; on which such outrages followed as were a scandal to the Christian name. Riotous mobs were summoned together by the sound of a horn; men, women, and children, were abused in the most shocking manner; being beaten, stoned, covered with mud: some, even pregnant women, were treated in a manner that cannot be mentioned. In the mean time, their houses were broken open by any that pleased, and their goods spoiled or carried away; some of the owners standing by, but not daring to oppose, as it would have been at the peril of their lives. Mr. Wesley's own account of those riots, as far as they re-

lated to himself, is so remarkable, that I made no scruple of inserting it at large.

"*Thursday, October* 20, 1743.—After preaching at Birmingham, I rode to Wednesbury. At twelve I preached in a ground near the middle of the town, to a far larger congregation than was expected, on 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' I believe every one present felt the power of God, and no creature offered to molest us.

"I was writing at Francis Ward's in the afternoon, when the cry arose that 'the mob had beset the house.' We prayed that God would disperse them. And it was so; so that in half an hour not a man was left. I told our brethren, 'Now is the time for us to go; but they pressed me exceedingly to stay. So, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five the mob surrounded the house again in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, 'Bring out the miniter; we *will* have the minister.'* I desired one to take their captain by the hand and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go and bring one or two of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two, who were ready to swallow the ground with rage; but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and standing up, asked, 'What do any of you want with me?' Some said, 'We want you to go with us to the justice.' I replied, 'That I will with all my heart!' I then spoke a few words, which God applied; so that they cried out with might and main, 'The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence!' I asked, 'Shall we go to

* See plate No. 3, p. 108.

the justice to-night, or in the morning?' Most of them cried, 'To-night! To-night!' On which I went before, and two or three hundred followed.

"The night came before we had walked a mile together, with heavy rain. However, on we went to Bentley-Hall, two miles from Wednesbury. One or two ran before to tell Mr. Lane, 'They had brought Mr. Wesley before his worship.'—Mr. Lane replied, 'What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Go and carry him back again.' By this time the main body came up and began knocking at the door. A servant told them, 'Mr. Lane was in bed.'—His son followed and asked, 'What was the matter?'—One replied, 'Why, an't please you, they sing psalms all day; nay, and make folks rise at five in the morning. And what would your worship advise us to do?—'To go home,' said Mr. Lane, 'and be quiet.'

"Here they were at a full stop, till one advised, 'To go to justice Persehouse at Walsal.'—All agreed to this. So we hastened on, and about seven came to his house. But Mr. Persehouse likewise sent word that 'he was in bed.—Now they were at a stand again; but at last, they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convoy me. But we had not gone a hundred yards, when the mob of Walsal came, pouring in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The Darlaston mob made what defence they could; but they were weary, as well as outnumbered. So that in a short time many being knocked down, the rest ran away and left me in their hands.

"To attempt speaking was vain: for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till we came to the town; where seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in; but a man, catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main street. I continued speaking all the time

to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made toward it and would have gone in, but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying, 'They would pull the house down to the ground.'—However, I stood at the door, and asked, 'Are you willing to hear me speak?'—Many cried out, 'No, no! Knock his brains out! Down with him! Kill him at once!' Others said, 'Nay; but we will hear him first!'—I began asking, 'What evil have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?' and continued speaking above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voice again; many crying out, 'Bring him away! Bring him away!'

"In the mean time my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, 'Sir, I will spend my life for you. Follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head.'—Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words and got close to me immediately. At the same time the gentleman in the shop cried out, 'For shame! For shame! Let him go!'—An honest butcher who was a little farther off said, 'It was a shame they should do thus; and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left; while those three or four men took me between them and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again; we therefore went on one side, over the mill-dam, and thence through the meadows, till, a little before ten, God brought me safe to Wednesbury; having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands.

"I never saw such a chain of providences before; so many convincing proofs that the hand of God is on every person and thing, overruling as it seemeth him good.

"A poor woman of Darlaston, who had headed that mob, and sworn that 'none should touch me,' when she saw her fellows give way, ran into the thickest of the throng and knocked down three or four men one after another. But many assaulting her at once she was soon overpowered, and had probably been killed in a few minutes, (three men keeping her down and beating her with all their might,) had not a man called out to them, 'Hold, Tom, hold!'—'Who is there?' said Tom. 'What honest Munchin? Nay then, let her go!'—So they held their hands, and let her get up and crawl home as well as she could.

"From the beginning to the end, I found the same presence of mind as if I had been sitting in my study. But I took no thought for one moment before another; only once it came into my mind, that if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat, and a light pair of boots.

"By how gentle degrees does God prepare us for his will! Two years ago a piece of brick grazed my shoulders. It was a year after that a stone struck me between the eyes. Last month I received one blow; and this evening two,—one before we came into the town, and one after we were gone out. But both were as nothing: for, though one man struck me on the breast with all his might, and the other on the mouth with such a force that the blood gushed out immediately, I felt no more pain from either of the blows than if they had touched me with a straw.

"It ought not to be forgotten, that when the rest of the society made all haste to escape for their lives, four only would not stir, William Sitch, Edward Slater, John Griffiths, and Joan Parks: these kept with me, resolving to live or die together. And none of them received a blow but William Sitch, who held me by the arm from one end of the town to the other. He was then dragged away and

knocked down; but he soon rose and got to me again. I afterward asked him, 'What he expected when the mob came upon us?'—He said, 'To die for him who had died for us;' and added, that 'he felt no hurry or fear, but calmly waited till God should require his soul of him.'

"When I came back to Francis Ward's, I found many of our brethren waiting upon God. Many also whom I never had seen before, came to rejoice with us. And the next morning, as I rode through the town, on my way to Nottingham, every one I met expressed such a cordial affection, that I could scarce believe what I saw and heard."

The persecution Mr. Wesley met with in Falmouth and its neighborhood, is so remarkable, that I shall give his own description of it; and this, with the account of the persecution at Wednesbury, will afford my readers some idea of the sufferings Mr. Wesley endured in the commencement of his extensive labors.

"Thursday, July 4.—I rode to Falmouth. About three in the afternoon I went to see a gentlewoman who had been indisposed. Almost as soon as I sat down, the house was beset on all sides by an innumerable multitude of people. A louder or more confused noise could hardly be at the taking of a city by storm. At first Mrs. B. and her daughter endeavored to quiet them: but it was labor lost. They might as well have attempted to still the raging of the sea, and were therefore soon glad to shift for themselves. The rabble roared with all their throats, 'Bring out the *Canorum!* Where is the *Canorum?*' (an unmeaning word which the Cornish rabble then used instead of *Methodist.*) No answer being given, they quickly forced open the outer door and filled the passage. Only a wainscoat partition was between us, which was not likely to stand long. I immediately took down a large looking-glass which hung against it, supposing the whole side would fall in at once. They began their work with abundance of bitter impreca-

tions. A poor girl who was left in the house was utterly astonished, and cried out, 'O sir, what must we do?'—I said, 'We must pray.'—Indeed, at that time, to all appearance, our lives were not worth an hour's purchase.—She asked, 'But, sir, is it not better for you to hide yourself? to get into the closet?'—I answered, 'No. It is best for me to stand just where I am.' Among those without were the crews of some privateers, which were lately come into the harbor. Some of these, being angry at the slowness of the rest, thrust them away, and coming up all together, set their shoulders to the inner door, and cried out, 'Avast, lads, avast!' Away went all the hinges at once, and the door fell back into the room. I stepped forward into the midst of them and said, 'Here I am! Which of you has any thing to say to me? To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? Or you? Or you?' I continued speaking till I came into the middle of the street, and then raising my voice, said, 'Neighbors, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak? They cried vehemently, 'Yes, yes! He shall speak. He shall. Nobody shall hinder him.' But having nothing to stand on, and no advantage of ground, I could be heard by a few only. However, I spoke without intermission; and as far as the sound reached, the people were still, till one or two of their captains turned about and swore, 'Not a man shall touch him.' Mr. Thomas, a clergyman, then came up and asked, 'Are you not ashamed to use a stranger thus?' He was soon seconded by two or three gentlemen of the town, and one of the aldermen, with whom I walked down the town, speaking all the time till I came to Mrs. Maddern's house. The gentlemen proposed sending for my horse to the door, and desired me to step in and rest the mean time. But on second thoughts, they judged it not advisable to let me go out among the people again. So they chose to send my horse before me to Penryn, and to send me thither by water; the sea running close by the back door of the house in which we were.

"I never saw before, no, not at Walsal itself, the hand of God so plainly shown as here. *There* I had some companions, who were willing to die with me; *here*, not a friend but one simple girl; who likewise was hurried away from me in an instant as soon as ever she came out of Mrs. B.'s house. *There* I received some blows, lost part of my clothes, and was covered over with dirt. *Here*, although the hands of perhaps some hundreds of people were lifted up to strike or throw, they were one and all stopped in the midway, so that not a man touched me with one of his fingers. Neither was any thing thrown from first to last, so that I had not even a speck of dirt on my clothes. Who can deny that God heareth the prayer? or that he hath all power in heaven and earth?"

The preachers in the different parts of the kingdom were permitted to 'drink of the same cup,' yea, in many instances, they suffered greater persecutions than Mr. Wesley himself. Stones, dirt, and rotten eggs, were the common weapons of the mob. In some instances, as in that of Mr. Thomas Mitchell,* they were thrown into ponds of water, snd held down till they were nearly drowned. Applications were made for redress to the neighboring magistrates, but generally in vain. They then, under the patronage of Mr. Wesley, had recourse to the court of king's bench, and in every instance, found the most ample justice. The judges of that court acted on every occasion with the greatest uprightness and impartiali-

* A plain, forcible preacher, greatly owned of God, especially to the poor. The late Dr. Hey, of Leeds, used to call upon Dr. Priestley, who then also lived at Leeds, and take him to the Methodist chapel. On one of those occasions, the preacher happened to be Mr. Mitchell. Dr. Hey, who was rather nice in hearing, was mortified that his philosophical friend should be led to hear so plain a preacher. On their return, however, he ventured to ask the doctor what he thought of the sermon. He replied, "that he thought it admirable!" But perceivng his friend's surprise, he added, "Other men *may* do good, Dr. Hey, but that man *must* do good, for he aims at nothing else."

ty; the consequence of which was, that in many places peace was restored.

Notwithstanding this brutal opposition, Mr. Wesley preached in most of the towns in Cornwall: and the seed sown, through the blessing of God, produced a plentiful harvest.—Perhaps there is no part of these kingdoms, where there has been a more general change. *Hurling*, their favorite but most brutal diversion, at which limbs were frequently broken and lives lost, is now hardly heard of: and that scandal of humanity, which had been so constantly practised, on all the coasts of Cornwall, *the plundering vessels that struck upon the rocks, and often murdering those that escaped from the wreck*, is now well nigh at an end. But it is not harmlessness or outward decency alone, which has evidenced the reality of their religion, but *faith working by love*, producing all inward and outward holiness.

About the time of the persecutions in Cornwall, John Nelson, of Birstal in Yorkshire, who has been mentioned before,* and Thomas Beard, an honest and industrious man, were pressed and sent off as soldiers, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance. John Nelson was, after much ill usage, released by an order from the secretary at war, and preached the gospel many years. But Thomas Beard sunk under his oppressions. He was then lodged at the hospital at Newcastle, where he praised God continually. His fever increasing he was bled. His arm festered, mortified, and was cut off: two or three days after which, God signed his discharge, and called him up to his eternal home.

While Mr. Wesley thus, like his Divine Master, 'endured the cross, despising the shame,' his brother, Mr. C. Wesley, was called to drink of the same cup. He had labored in the preceding year in the neighborhood of Bristol till the 17th of May, when he set out for the north. He preached at

* See Appendix, Letter A.

JOHN NELSON

METHODIST SOLDIERS
at the battle of Fontenoy 1745.

Painswick, and then visited Stroud, Evesham, and several other places; and on the 20th, he observes, "I got once more to our dear colliers at Wednesbury.* Here the seed has taken root, and many are added to the church. A society of more than three hundred are seeking full redemption in the cleansing blood of Christ. The enemy rages exceedingly against them. A few here have returned railing for railing; but the generality have behaved as the followers of Christ Jesus.

"*May* 21.—I spent the morning in conference with several who 'have received the atonement' under my brother's ministry. I saw the piece of ground to build a chapel upon, given us by a Dissenter. I walked with many of our brethren to Walsal, singing as we went. We were received with the old complaint, 'Behold these that turn the world upside down are come hither also!' We walked through the town amidst the noisy greetings of our enemies. I stood on the steps of the market-house. A host of men came against us; and they lifted up their voice and raged horribly. I preached from these words, 'But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course with joy,' &c. The street was full of fierce Ephesian beasts, (the principal man setting them on,) who roared, and shouted, and threw stones incessantly. At the conclusion, a stream of ruffians was suffered to beat me down from the steps; I rose, and, having given the blessing, was beat down again, and so a third time. When we had returned thanks to the God of our salvation, I then from the steps bid them depart in peace, and walked through the thickest of the rioters. They reviled us, but had no commission to touch a hair of our head.

"*May 26th.*—In the afternoon I came to the flock in Sheffield, who are as sheep among wolves; the minister having so stirred up the people that they are ready to tear the

* See plate 7, p. 130, also appendix letter C.

Methodists in pieces. At six o'clock I went to the society house, next door to our brother Bennet's. Hell from beneath seemed moved to oppose us. As soon as I was in the desk with David Taylor, the floods began to lift up their voice. An officer in the army contradicted and blasphemed. I took no notice of him, but sang on. The stones flew thick, striking the desk and the people. To save them, and the house from being pulled down, I gave out that I should preach in the street and look them in the face. The whole army of the aliens followed me. The captain laid hold on me and began rioting: I gave him *A word in season, or advice to a soldier.* I then prayed, particularly for his majesty king George, and preached the gospel, although with much contention. The stones often struck me in the face. I prayed for sinners, as servants of their master, the devil; upon which the captain ran at me with great fury, threatening revenge for abusing, as he called it, 'the king his master.' He forced his way through the brethren, drew his sword, and presented it to my breast. I immediately opened my breast, and fixing my eye on his, and smiling in his face, calmly said, 'I fear God and honor the king.' His countenance fell in a moment, he fetched a deep sigh, and putting up his sword, quietly left the place. He had said to one of the company, who afterward informed me, 'You shall see if I do but hold my sword to his breast he will faint away.' So perhaps I should, had I only his principles to trust to; but if at that time I was not afraid, no thanks to my natural courage. We returned to our brother Bennet's, and gave ourselves up to prayer. The rioters followed, and exceeded in outrage all I have seen before. Those at Moorfields, Cardiff, and Walsal, were lambs to these. As there is no king in Israel, I mean no magistrate in Sheffield, every man doth as seemeth good in his own eyes."

The mob now formed the design of pulling down the society house, and set upon their work while Mr. C. Wesley and the people were praying and praising God within. "It

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An IRISH PREACHER
meeting a persecutor of the Methodists in Ireland

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Mr. WESLEY
preaching to the Colliers

was a glorious time," saye he, "with us: every word of exhortation sunk deep, every prayer was sealed, and many found *the spirit of glory resting upon them.*"*—The next day the house was completely pulled down, not one stone being left upon another: "nevertheless," said Mr. Wesley to a friend, "'the foundation standeth sure;' and 'our house, not made with hands, is eternal in the heavens.'"—This day he preached again in the street, somewhat more quietly than before. In the evening the rioters being very noisy again, and threatened to pull down the house where Mr. C. Wesley lodged. He went out to them; read the riot act, and made a suitable exhortation. They soon afterward separated, and peace was restored.

May 27.—At five in the morning he took leave of the society in these words, 'Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.' He observes, "Our hearts were knit together, and greatly comforted: we rejoiced in hope of 'the glorious appearing of the great God,' who had now delivered us out of the mouth of the lions. David Taylor informed me that the people of Thorpe, through which we should pass, were exceeding mad against us. So we found them as we approached the place and were turning down the lane to Barley-Hall. The ambush rose and assaulted us with stones, eggs, and dirt. My horse flew from side to side till he found his way through them. They wounded D. Taylor in the forehead, and the wound bled much. I turned back and asked, What was the reason why a clergyman could not pass without such treatment? At first the rioters scattered, but, their captain rallying them, answered with horrible imprecations and stones. My horse took fright, and turned away

* 1 Pet. iv, 24.

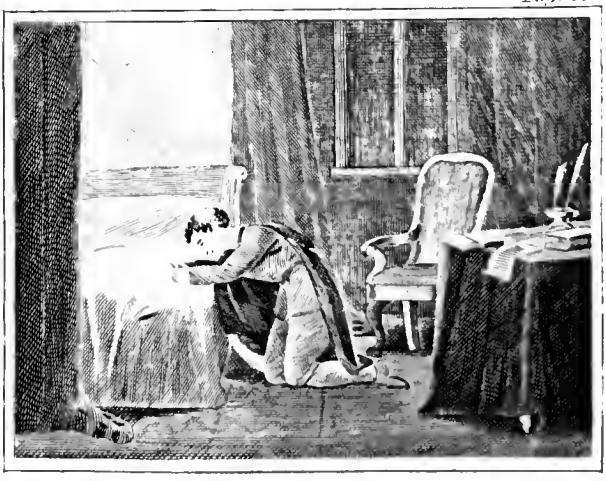
with me down a steep hill. The enemy pursued me from afar, and followed shouting. Blessed be God I received no hurt, only from the eggs and dirt. My clothes indeed abhorred me, and my arm pained me a little from a blow I received at Sheffield."

"*May* 30.—My horse threw me and fell upon me. My companion thought I had broken my neck; but my leg only was bruised, my hand sprained, and my head stunned, which spoiled me from *making hymns*,* or thinking at all in that way till the next day, when the Lord brought us safe to Newcastle. At seven o'clock I went to the room, which will contain about two thousand persons. We rejoiced for the consolation of our mutual faith.

During the riots, he one day observes, "I went to church and heard that terrible chapter, Jeremiah the 7th,—enough, one would think, to make even this hardened people tremble. Never were words more applicable than those, 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, are these!*— Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely—and come and stand before me in this house?'" &c. Mr. C. Wesley informed me, that upon one of those occasions, after hearing himself abused in a sermon longer than usual, he remained in his pew when the congregation was dismissed, it being what is called Sacrament-Sunday. The minis-

* He composed his finest hymns while engaged in those labors, and often on horseback. See first cut in the plate.

CHARLES WESLEY



JOHN DE LA FLETCHER

ter, perceiving him, called to the clerk, took him inside the rails, and talked with him for some time. The minister then proceeded with the service. When Mr. C. Wesley approached the table, the parson retreated, and the clerk came forward, and holding out the large prayer-book, cried out, "Avaunt, Satan! avaunt!" Mr. C. Wesley remained for some time, but finding that nothing would quiet the zealous clerk, and that the minister remained stationary at the wall, he retired to his pew, and the service concluded.

On Friday, August 24, 1744, Mr. John Wesley preached for the last time at Oxford, before the university.* He had preached to them twice before, since the time he began to declare the truth in the fields and highways. Those sermons are printed in the first volume of his Works, and are well worthy of a serious perusal. "I am now," says he, "clear of the blood of those men. I have fully delivered my own soul. And I am well pleased that it should be the very day on which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke. Yet what a wide difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had; whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss, and that in a kind of honorable manner; it being determined that when my next turn to preach came, they would pay another person to preach for me. And so they did twice or thrice: even to the time that I resigned my

* Mr. C. Wesley came to Oxford on this occasion, where he met with his brother, the Rev. Messrs. Piers, Meriton, and others. He observes in his journal, "My brother bore his testimony before a crowded audience, much increased by the races. Never have I seen a more attentive congregation: they did not suffer a word to slip them. Some of the heads of colleges stood up the whole time and fixed their eyes upon him. If they can endure sound doctrine like his, he will surely leave a blessing behind him. The vice-chancellor sent after him and desired his notes, which he sealed up and sent immediately."

fellowship."—They respected his general character, with which they were well acquainted.

Mr. Wesley's observation respecting the ejection of so many pious and able ministers, is affecting. It was an awful act, and an awful responsibility remains with those who exercised such an authority. But 'the Lord reigneth, and the fierceness of man shall turn to his praise.' I cannot but think that the Lord, 'who is head over all things to his church,' saw that there was no other way of saving the nation from that deluge of Antinomianism which threatened to overwhelm it. How many children of light were thus called to walk in providential darkness. But he had a better dispensation in store for his people. A dispensation that never did, that never can, disturb the providential government; which was not given 'by might or power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.'

"LEARE, *near* ANTWERP, *October* 21, 1745.

"REVEREND SIR,—Since I wrote to you last I have gone through great trials. It was not the least that I have lost my dear brother Clements for a season, he being shot through both the arms. To try me farther, J. Evans and Bishop were both killed in the battle, as was J. Greenwood soon after.* Two more, who spoke boldly in the name of Jesus, are fallen into the world again. So I am left alone: but I know it is for my good. Seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many wax cold, adds wings to my devotion, and my faith grows daily as a plant by the water side.

"The Lord has been pleased to try our little flock, and to show them his mighty power. Some days before the late battle, one of them, standing at his tent door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand, and was so filled with the love of God that he danced before his comrades. In the battle before he died, he openly declared,

* See plate 4, p. 128; also Appendix, letter B.

'I am going to rest from my labors in the bosom of Jesus.' I believe nothing like this was ever heard of before in the midst of so wicked an army as ours. Some were crying out in their wounds, 'I am going to my Beloved!' others, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' and many that were not wounded were crying to their Lord to take them to himself. There was such boldness in the battle among this little despised flock, that it made the officers as well as common soldiers amazed; and they acknowledge it to this day. As to my own part I stood the fire of the enemy for above seven hours. Then my horse was shot under me, and I was exposed both to the enemy and our own horse. But that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go, the balls flying on every side; and thousands lay bleeding, groaning, dying, and dead on each hand. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace, but it never singed one hair of my head. The hotter it grew the more strength was given me. I was full of joy and love, as much as I could well bear. Going on, I met one of our brethren with a little dish in his hand, seeking for water. He smiled and said, 'he had got a sore wound in his leg.' I asked, 'Have you got Christ in your heart?' He answered, 'I have, and I have had him all the day. Blessed be God, that I ever saw your face.' Lord, what am I, that I should be counted worthy to set my hand to the Gospel plough? Lord, humble me, and lay me in the dust!

JOHN HAIME."

CHAPTER VI.

From the first Conference 1744, to the Conference 1770, the minutes of which contained the propositions, which gave rise to the unanswerable checks, of that man of God, John de la Fletcher. A period of twenty-six years.

June 25th, 1744, the first Conference was held in London. It consisted of six clergymen, and a few lay preach-

ers. But there was no annual publication of the minutes of the Conference, till the year 1763. On Christmas day, 1744, Mr. Wesley drew up the rules of the bands.

CONVERSATION I.

London, 25th of June, 1744.

It is desired, that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God: that we may meet with a single eye, and as little children who have every thing to learn: that every thing which is proposed, may be examined to the foundation: that every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart: and that every question which arises may be thoroughly debated and settled.

Q. 1. Need we be fearful of doing this? What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles?

A. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light, to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God.*

Q. 2. How may the time of this conference be made more eminently a time of watching unto prayer?

A. 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. 3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on this our labor.

Q. 3. How far does each of us agree to submit to the judgment of the majority?

A. In speculative things, each one can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced; in every practical point,

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* Could any work that was not of God endure such an ordeal as this? Surely *it is the Lord who maketh men to be thus of one mind in a house.*

each will submit so far as he can without wounding his conscience.

Q. 4. Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man, or number of men, upon earth?

A. It is plain he cannot; either to bishop, convocation, or general council. And this is that grand principle of private judgment on which all the reformers proceeded: "Every man must judge for himself; because every man must give an account of himself to God."

CONVERSATION II.

The design of the meeting was proposed, namely, to consider—1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. And 3. What to do; i. e. how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice. They began with considering the doctrine of *Justification:* The questions relating thereto, with the substance of the answers given, were as follow:—

Q. 1. What is it to be justified?

A. To be pardoned and received into God's favor: into such a state that, if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

Q. 2. Is faith the condition of justification?

A. Yes; 'for every one who believeth not is condemned; and every one who believes is justified.'

Q. 3. But must not repentance, and works meet for repentance, go before this faith?

A. Without doubt; if by *repentance* you mean conviction of sin; and by 'works meet for repentance,' obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, ceasing to do evil, doing good, and using the ordinances according to the power we have received.

Q. 4. What is faith?

A. Faith in general is a divine supernatural Ελεγχος* of

* Conviction or evidence.

things not seen; i. e. of past, future, or spiritual things: it is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God.

First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, 'Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.' This is that faith by which he is justified or pardoned the moment he receives it. Immediately the same Spirit bears witness, "Thou art pardoned: thou hast redemption in his blood." And this is saving faith, whereby 'the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.'

Q. 5. Have all Christians this faith? May not a man be justified, and not know it?

A. That all true Christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from Rom. viii, 15, 16; Eph. iv, 32; 2 Cor. xiii, 5; Heb. viii, 10—12; 1 John iv, 13, and v, 19. And that no man can be justified and not know it, appears farther from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from the immediate as well as distant fruits thereof.

Q. 6. But may not a man go to heaven without it?

A. It does not appear from holy writ, that a man who hears the gospel can, (Mark xvi, 16,) whatever a heathen may do. (Rom. ii, 14.)

Q. 7. What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith?

A. Peace, joy, love; power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin.

Q. 8. Does any one believe who has not the witness in himself, or any longer than he sees, loves, and obeys God?

A. We apprehend not; *seeing God* being the very essence of faith; love and obedience the inseparable properties of it.

Q. 9. What sins are consistent with justifying faith?

A. No *wilful sin*. If a believer wilfully sins, he casts away his faith. Neither is it possible he should have justifying faith again without previously repenting.

Q. 10. Must every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness? Will he do so unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness? Does God otherwise withdraw himself?

A. It is certain a believer *need never* again come into condemnation. It seems he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness: and that (ordinarily at least,) he *will not*, unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness. Yet it is true that the first joy does seldom last long; that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears; and that God frequently permits great heaviness before any large manifestation of himself.

Q. 11. Are *works* necessary to the continuance of *faith?*

A. Without doubt; for a man may forfeit the free gift of God either by sins of omission or commission.

Q. 12. Can faith be lost but for want of works?

A. It cannot but through disobedience.

Q. 13. How is faith *made perfect by works?*

A. The more we exert our faith, the more it is increased. 'To him that hath shall be given.'

Q. 14. St. Paul says, 'Abraham was not justified by works.' St. James, 'He was justified by works.' Do they not contradict each other?

A. No: 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that justification which was when Abraham was seventy-five years old, about twenty years before Isaac was born. St. James, of that justification which was when he offered up Isaac on the altar. 2. Because they do not speak of the same works: St. Paul speaking of works that precede faith: St. James, of works that spring from it.

Q. 15. In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind?

A. In Adam all die, i. e. 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i. e. were disunited from God. And hence, 3. We are all born with a sinful, devilish nature: by

reason whereof, 4. We are children of wrath, liable to death eternal. (Rom. v, 18; Eph. ii, 3.)

Q. 16. In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to all mankind, or to believers?

A. We do not find it expressly affirmed in Scripture, that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any:* although we do find that 'faith is imputed to us for righteousness.'

That text, 'As by one man's disobedience, all men were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, all were made righteous,' we conceive means, by the merits of Christ all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's *actual* sin.

We conceive farther, that through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the resurrection. 2. Their souls receive a capacity of spiritual life; and 3. An actual spark or seed thereof. 4. All believers become children of grace, reconciled to God; and 5. Are made partakers of the divine nature.

Q. 17. Have we not leaned toward *Antinomianism?*

A. We are afraid we have.

Q. 18. What is *Antinomianism?*

A. The doctrine which makes void the law through faith.

Q. 19. What are the main pillars thereof?

A. 1. That Christ abolished the moral law. 2. That therefore Christians are not obliged to observe it. 3. That one branch of Christian liberty is liberty from obeying the commandments of God. 4. That it is bondage to do a thing because it is commanded, or forbear it because it is forbidden. 5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works. 6. That a preacher ought not to exhort to good works: not unbelievers, because it is hurtful; not believers, because it is needless.

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* That is, his *personal* righteousness. This is the great Antinomian error. But the divine atonement, with its glorious concomitants, may be called *his righteousness;* and may be said to be imputed to believers, as it was wrought for guilty man, and by the merit of it only can he be justified.

CONVERSATION III.

Q. 1. Is a *sense* of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favor? Or may there be some exempt cases?

A. We dare not say there are not.

Q. 2. Is it necessary to inward and outward holiness?

A. We incline to think it is.

Q. 3. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in seeing God: even as many as there are between him who sees the sun, when it shines on his eyelids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open in the full blaze of its beams.

Q. 4. Does a man believe any longer than he loves God?

A. In no wise. For 'neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth, without faith working by love.'

Q. 5. Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was not he in the favor of God, 'when his prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God?' i. e. Before he believed in Christ?

A. It does seem that he was, in some degree. But we speak not of those who have not heard the gospel.

Q. 6. Is a believer constrained to obey God?

A. At first he often is. 'The love of Christ constraineth him.' After this he may obey or he may not, no constraint being laid upon him.

Q. 7. Can faith be lost but through disobedience?

A. It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart; then his intercourse with God is cut off, i. e. his faith is lost: and after this he may fall into outward sin, being now weak and like another man.

Q. 8. How can such a one recover faith?

A. By repenting and doing the first works. (Rev. ii. 5.)

Q. 9. Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

A. Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Q. 10. Should we not have a care of depreciating justification in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

A. Undoubtedly we should beware of this; for one may insensibly slide into it.

Q. 11. How shall we effectually avoid it?

A. When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state as strongly as possible.

Q. 12. Does not the truth of the gospel lie very near both to *Calvinism* and *Antinomianism?*

A. Indeed it does; as it were, within a hair's breadth.* So that it is altogether foolish and sinful, because we do not quite agree with one or the other, to run from them as far as ever we can.

Q. 13. Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?

A. 1. In ascribing all good to the free grace of God. 2. In denying all *natural* free-will, and all power antecedent to grace. And 3. In excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Q. 14. Wherein may we come to the edge of Antinomianism?

A. 1. In exalting all the merits and love of Christ. 2. In rejoicing evermore.

Q. 15. Does faith supercede (set aside the necessity of) holiness or good works?

A. In no wise. So far from it that it implies both, as a cause does its effects.

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* So near does the road of truth lie to the ditch of error! But a believer who abides in the faith, sees and abhors it, 1 John, i. 5—7.

It may be useful to add a few remarks on the method pursued in the choice of the itinerant preachers, as many have formed the most erroneous ideas on the subject, imagining they are employed with hardly any preparation; while others have seemed to think they are a distinct race from those to whom they minister. 1. They are received, in common with all other persons, merely as private members on trial.—2. After a quarter of a year, if they are found walking according to the gospel, they are admitted as proper members.—3. When the grace and abilities of any members are sufficiently manifest, they are appointed leaders of classes.—4. If they then appear to be called to more important services, they are employed to exhort occasionally in the smaller congregations.—5. If approved in this line of duty, they are allowed to preach.—6. Out of these men, who are called *local preachers*, are selected the *itinerant preachers*, who are first proposed in the quarterly meetings of the circuits to which they belong, secondly, in the district meeting, and lastly, in the conference; and if accepted are appointed to circuits.—7. Their characters and conduct are examined annually in the district meetings and in the conference; and if they continue faithful for four years of trial, they are received into full connexion. At these conferences also strict inquiry is made into the conduct of every itinerant.—The preachers assembled are thus, from their identity of interest with the great body of the people, and their mutual sympathy with the whole, their natural and only entire representatives in all those affairs to which the conference directs its cares; —united with the whole connexion, as that in which they have resolved to live and die; and yet, because of their itinerancy, never so connected with any individual society as to become the organs of those changes and innovations which in particular places might be often advocated.—Sufficiently dependent to be one with their people; but sufficiently distinct, in order and office, to be the effectual guardians of that

which has been committed to their trust, as those who must give the *final* account of their stewardship, not to man, but to God. By them only can the discipline of the connexion in its wide extent be maintained; and the Lord and his people require it at their hands.

Mr. Wesley's great love of exactness and order was now abundantly gratified. In every place where he or the preachers in connexion with him labored, the same rules were observed in the formation and government of the societies. From this time the work of reformation and of true religion went forward with a regularity and sameness highly characteristic of the true gospel of God our Savior.

In the tumultuous years of forty-five and forty-six, during the Rebellion, the work of God spread with great rapidity. The Scriptures declare, 'When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the nations will learn righteousness.' — The ministers of God went through the land calling upon sinners to repent; and many had ears to hear 'the things that are for their peace.'

August 1, 1745, the second conference was held in Bristol.

Mr. Wesley not only studied and labored hard, at the same time enduring much unmerited reproach, but he passed through much fatigue and danger in his travels. In his journal, he tells us, that in the latter end of February he preached at Nottingham. The next day, a friend piloted him through the mire and water, to Sykehouse. Proceeding northward, he found much snow about Borough-bridge, which made him travel so slowly, that night overtook him when he had six or seven miles to go, to the place where he had intended to lodge. The next day the roads were abundantly worse. The snow was deeper, the causeways were impassable, and there was such a hard frost succeeding the thaw, that the ground was like glass. At that time, and for some years after, there were no turnpike roads in those parts of England. He was often obliged to walk, it being

impossible to ride. He passed over dreary moors, which appeared great pathless wastes of white, till at length, late in the evening, he reached Newcastle. "Many a rough journey," said he, "have I had before, but one like this I never had."

May 13, 1646, the third conference was held in the same city. It consisted of the two Wesleys, two other clergyman, and five lay-preachers.

The winter was now approaching, yet Mr. C. Wesley, although in a poor state of health, determined to take his northern journey. October 10, he tells us, "I set out for Newcastle with my young companion and friend, E. Perronet, whose heart the Lord hath given me. His family has been kept from us so long by a mistaken notion that we were against the Church."—He visited the brethren in Staffordshire, and on the 15th preached at Tippen Green. After preaching in the evening, a friend invited him to sleep at his house, at no great distance from the place. Soon after they were set down the mob beset the house, and beating at the door demanded entrance. Mr. Wesley ordered the door to be set open, and the house was immediately filled. "I sat still," says he, "in the midst of them for half an hour. I was a little concerned for E. Perronet, lest such rough treatment, at his first setting out, should daunt him. But he abounded in valor, and was for reasoning with the wild beasts before they had spent any of their violence. He got a deal of abuse thereby, and not a little dirt, both of which he took very patiently. I had no design to preach; but being called upon by so unexpected a congregation, I rose at last and read, 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.' While I reasoned with them of judgment to come, they grew calmer by little and little. I then spake to them one by one till the Lord had disarmed them all. One who stood out the long-

est I held by the hand and urged the love of Christ crucified. till in spite of both his natural and diabolical courage, he trembled like a leaf. I was constrained to break out in prayer for him. Our leopards had all become lambs, and very kind we all were at parting. Near midnight the house was clear and quiet. We gave thanks to God for our salvation, and slept in peace."—Such were the conflicts, and such were the victories frequently obtained in that day.

October 21, Mr. C. Wesley preached at Dewsbury, where John Nelson had gathered many stray sheep and formed a society. The minister did not condemn them unheard, but talked with them, examined into the doctrine they had been taught, and its effects on their lives. When he found that as many as had been affected by the preaching, were evidently reformed, and brought to church and sacrament, he testified his approbation of the work, and rejoiced that sinners were converted to God. Had all the ministers of the established church acted with the same candor, they would have served the church better, and the work would have been much more extended than we have yet seen it.

June 15, 1747, the fourth conference was held in London. In this year, Methodism began in Ireland, in the city of Dublin.

"February 24.—A day never to be forgotton! At seven o'clock, I walked quietly to Mr. Philps' and began preaching a little before the time appointed. For three quarters of an hour, I invited a few listening sinners to Christ. Soon after, Satan's whole army assaulted the house. We sat in a little ground room, and ordered all the doors to be thrown open. They brought a hand-engine, and began to play into the house. We kept our seats, and they rushed into the passage; just then, Mr. Borough, the constable, came, and seizing the spout of the engine, carried it off. They swore if he did not deliver it they would pull down the house. At that time they might have taken us prison-

ers; we were close to them, and none to interpose; but they hurried out to fetch the larger engine. In the mean time, we were advised to send for the mayor; but Mr. Mayor was gone out of town, in the sight of the people, which gave great encouragement to those who were already wrought up to a proper pitch, by the curate and the gentlemen of the town; particularly Mr. Sutton and Mr. Willy, Dissenters, the two leading men. Mr. Sutton frequently came out to the mob to keep up their spirits. He sent word to Mrs. Philips, that if she did not turn that fellow out to the mob, he would send them to drag him out. Mr. Willy passed by again and again, assuring the rioters he would stand by them, and secure them against the law, do what they would."

The rioters "now therefore began playing the larger engine, which broke the windows, flooded the rooms, and spoiled the goods.* We were withdrawn to a small upper room, in the back part of the house; seeing no way to escape their violence, as they seemed under the full power of the old murderer. They first laid hold on the man who kept the society-house, dragged him away, and threw him into the horse-pond.—We gave ourselves unto prayer, believing the Lord would deliver us; how or when, we saw not; nor any possible way of escaping: we therefore stood still to see the salvation of God. Every now and then, some or other of our friends would venture to us; but they rather weakened our hands, so that we were forced to stop our ears, and look up. Among the rest, the mayor's maid came, and told us her mistress was in tears about me; and begged me to disguise myself in women's clothes, and try to make my escape. Her heart had been turned toward us by the conversion of her son, just on the brink of ruin. God laid his hand on the poor prodigal, and instead of running to sea, he entered the society.—The rioters without continued playing their engine, which diverted them for

* See Plate 7, p. 130; also appendix letter D.

some time; but their number and fierceness still increased, and the *gentlemen* supplied them with pitchers of ale, as much as they would drink. They were now on the point of breaking in, when Mr. Borough thought of reading the Proclamation: he did so, at the hazard of his life. In less than an hour, of above a thousand wild beasts, none were left but the guard, our constable, who had applied to Mr. Street, the only justice in the town; but he would not act. We found there was no help in man, which drove us closer to the Lord; and we prayed, with little intermission, the whole day."

The mob, however, rallied again, and Mr. C. Wesley observes, "Our enemies at their return made their main assault at the back door, swearing horribly they would have me if it cost them their lives. Many seeming accidents occurred to prevent their breaking in. The man of the house came home, and instead of turning me out, as they expected, took part with us, and stemmed the tide for some time. They now got a notion that I had made my escape; and ran down to the inn, and played the engine there. They forced the inkeeper to turn out our horses, which he immediately sent to Mr. Clarks; which drew the rabble and their engine thither. But the resolute old man charged and presented his gun, till they retreated. Upon their revisiting us, we stood in jeopardy every moment. Such threatenings, curses, and blasphemies, I have never heard. They seemed kept out by a continued miracle. I remember the Roman senators sitting in the Forum, when the Gauls broke in upon them; but thought there was a fitter posture for Christians, and told my companion they should take us off our knees. We were kept from all hurry and discomposure of spirit, by a divine power resting upon us. We prayed and conversed as freely as if we had been in the midst of our brethren; and had great confidence that the Lord would either deliver us *from* the danger, or *in* it. In the height of the storm, just when we were falling into

the hands of the drunken enraged multitude, Mr. Minton was so little disturbed that he fell fast asleep.

"They were now close to us on every side, and over our heads untiling the roof. A ruffian cried out, 'Here they are behind the curtain.' At this time we fully expected their appearance, and retired to the furthermost corner of the room; and I said, '*This is the crisis!*' In that moment Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. We heard not a breath without, and wondered what was become of them. The silence lasted for three quarters of an hour, before any one came near us; and we continued in mutual exhortation and prayer, looking for deliverance. I often told my companions, 'Now God it at work for us: he is contriving our escape: he can turn these leopards into lambs; can command the heathen to bring his children on their shoulders, and make our fiercest enemies the instruments of our deliverance.' About three o'clock, Mr. Clark knocked at the door, and brought with him the persecuting constable. He said, 'Sir, if you will promise never to preach here again, the gentlemen and I will engage to bring you safe out of town.'—My answer was, 'I shall promise no such thing. Setting aside my office, I will not give up my birthright as an Englishman, of visiting what place I please of his majesty's dominions.'—'Sir,' said the constable, 'we expect no such promise, that you will never come here again: only tell me, that it is not your *present* intention, that I may tell the gentlemen, who will then secure your quiet departure.'—I answered, 'I cannot come again immediately, because I must return to London a week hence. But, *observe*, I make no promise of not preaching here; and do not you say that I do.'

"He went away with this answer, and we betook ourselves to prayer and thanksgiving. We perceived it was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes. The hearts of our adversaries were turned. Whether pity for

us, or fear for themselves, wrought strongest, God knoweth; probably the latter; for the mob were wrought up to such a pitch of fury, that their masters dreaded the consequence, and therefore went about appeasing the multitude, and charging them not to touch us in our departure.

"While the constable was gathering his *posse*, we got our things from Mr. Clarks and prepared to go forth. The whole multitude were without, expecting us, and saluted us with a general shout. Mr. Minton and I took horse in the face of our enemies, who began clamoring against us: the gentlemen were dispersed among the mob, to bridle them. We rode a slow pace up the street, the whole multitude pouring along on both sides, and attending us with loud acclamations:—such fierceness and diabolical malice I have not before seen in human faces. They ran up to our horses as if they would swallow us, but did not know which was Wesley. We felt great peace and acquiescence in the honor done us, while the whole town were spectators of our march. When out of sight we mended our pace, and about seven o'clock came to Wrexall. The news of our danger was got thither before us; but we brought the welcome tidings of our deliverance. We joined in hearty prayer to our Deliverer, singing the hymn beginning with

> Worship, and thanks, and blessing,
> And strength, ascribe to Jesus, &c.

Mr. Wesley continued his frequent visits to the most distant parts of the kingdom. No season of the year, no change of weather, could either prevent or retard his journeys. He generally preached two or three times every day, and regulated the societies wherever he came. His whole heart was in the work, and his fixed resolution surmounted every difficulty.

In February, 1747, being in Yorkshire, he met with a clergyman, who told him some of the preachers had frequently

preached in his parish; and his judgment was, 1. That their preaching had done some good, but more harm. Because, 2. Those who have attended it had only turned from one wickedness to another; they had only changed sabbath-breaking, swearing, or drunkenness, for slandering, backbiting, and evil speaking; and 3. Those who did not attend it were provoked hereby to return evil for evil. So that the former were, in effect, no better; the latter worse than before.

"The same objection, in substance," says Mr. Wesley, "has been made in most other parts of England. It therefore deserves a serious answer, which will equally hold in all places. It is allowed, 1. That our preaching has done some good; common swearers, sabbath breakers, drunkards, thieves, fornicators, having been reclaimed from those outward sins. But it is affirmed, 2. That it has done more harm; the persons so reclaimed only changing one wickedness for another; and their neighbors being so provoked thereby as to become worse than they were before.

"'Those who have left their outward sins,' you affirm, 'have only changed drunkenness or sabbath breaking, for backbiting or evil speaking.' I answer, If you affirm this of them all, it is notoriously false; many we can name, who left cursing, swearing, backbiting, drunkenness, and evil speaking together, and who are, to this day, just as fearful of slandering as they are of cursing or swearing. And if some are not yet enough aware of this snare of the devil, we may hope they will be ere long. Meantime bless God for what he has done, and pray that he would deliver them from this death also.

"You affirm farther, 'That their neighbors are provoked hereby to return evil for evil; and so while the former are no better, the latter are worse than they were before.'

"I answer, 1. 'These are worse than they were before.' But why? Because they do fresh 'despite to the spirit of

grace;' because they 'despise that longsuffering' love of God which would lead them, as it does their neighbors, to repentance.* And in laying the blame of this on those who will 'no longer run with them to the same excess of riot,' they only fulfil the Scriptures, and fill up the measure of their own iniquity.

"I answer, 2. There is still no proportion at all between the good on the one hand, and the harm on the other: for they who reject the goodness of God were servants of the devil before; and they are but servants of the devil still. But they who accept it are brought from the power of Satan to serve the living and true God."

In April, Mr. Wesley, on his return from the north, spent an hour with the same clergyman, and pressed him to make good his assertion, that the preaching of the Methodists had done more harm than good. This he did not choose to pursue; but enlarged on the harm it might occasion in succeeding generations. Mr. Wesley adds, "I cannot see the force of this argument. I dare not neglect the doing certain present good for fear of some probable ill consequences in the succeeding century."—Thanks be to God, those ill consequences have not yet appeared after more than seventy years' trial. The Lord still owns it to be his work.

On the 24th of June, 1748, Mr. Wesley opened his large school at Kingswood. He had long before built a small one for the children of the colliers, which still exists. The last was intended for the children of our principal friends, that they might receive a complete education in the languages and sciences, without endangering their morals in the great schools, where vice is so prevalent. In time, many of the preachers married and had families. Their little pittance

* 'The publicans and harlots,' says our Lord, 'repented at the preaching of John, and ye, when ye saw it, repented not afterward that ye might believe.'

was not sufficient to enable them to support their children at school. The uninterrupted duties of the itinerant life would not permit the father to give his son the necessary education he required: and it is well known how impossible it is, in general, for a mother to instruct, or even to govern a son after a given age, especially during the absence of the father. On these considerations, after a few years, the school was appropriated to the education of a considerable number of the preacher's sons, as well as of the children of private independent members. These were instructed, boarded and clothed; and the charity is supported by an annual collection made in all the chapels belonging to the societies in these kingdoms. The collection is now so increased, that small sums are allowed out of it toward the education of preachers' daughters. Mr. Wesley drew up a set of rules for this school, which have been highly admired by most that have seen them.

But this pious design, like all human institutions, often fell below the expectations of the benevolent founder. Yet, notwithstanding this, it has been productive of much good. Many useful preachers have been thereby preserved for the general work, and have been enabled to devote their whole life to the immediate service of God, who must otherwise have sunk under the weight of their families, and settled in some trade for their support. The school is now wholly appropriated to the sons of the itinerant preachers. The great increase of the work rendered this absolutely necessary. Another school has been opened in Yorkshire on the same plan, since the death of Mr. Wesley. The Lord has greatly blessed and prospered both these institutions.

A circumstance respecting the erection of this edifice deserves to be remembered. Mr. Wesley was mentioning to a lady, with whom he was in company in the neighborhood of Bristol, his desire and design of erecting a Christian school, such as would not disgrace the apostolic age. The

lady was so pleased with his views, that she immediately went to her escrutoire, and brought him five hundred pounds in bank notes, desiring him to accept of them, and to enter upon his plan immediately. He did so. Afterward being in company with the same lady, she inquired how the building went on; and whether he stood in need of farther assistance. He informed her that he had laid out all the money he had received, and that he was three hundred pounds in debt; at the same time apologizing, and entreating her not to consider it as a concern of hers. But she immediately retired and brought him the sum he wanted.

June 22, 1748, the fifth conference was held in Bristol. It cannot be gathered with certainty, either from Mr. Wesley's Journals, or any other source of information, that there was a conference every year from this time till 1763, and yet it appears that in some of those years there were two conferences.

The first effectual check that was given to this mobbing, I believe was in London. Sir John Ganson, chairman of the Middlesex justices, waited on Mr. Wesley, in the name of his brethren, to say, that the justices had orders from the government to do him and his friends justice whenever they should apply; his Majesty being determined that no man in his dominions should be persecuted for conscience sake. This reflects great honor upon the sovereign. But it was become absolutely necessary that something should be done to quell the increasing tumults. Of this necessity even the enemies of the Methodists were made sensible. In Staffordshire, the mob turned upon their employers, and threatened, unless they gave them money, to serve them as they had done the Methodists. And if they saw a stranger who had the appearance of a Methodist, they immediately attacked him.

A Quaker happened to ride through Wednesbury: they swore he was a preacher, pulled him off his horse, dragged

him to a coal-pit, and were with difficulty prevented from throwing him in. But he prosecuted them at the assizes, and from that time the tumults in Staffordshire subsided.

After some years of persecution and oppression, having gained a few trials, they began to be more peremptory in demanding justice. But at the quarter sessions they were frequently disappointed. However, they traversed and appealed to the higher courts. They often succeeded at the assizes, and almost always at the king's-bench. By degrees it became understood that the Methodists had a right to liberty and protection, as well as their fellow-subjects, and that they were determined to claim these privileges. However, a little while before the death of Mr. Wesley, attempts were made in some parts of the kingdom to prosecute them under the conventicle act. But this was a measure so shocking to the candid and liberal part of the public, that it was soon abandoned, even by those whose spirits and principles were the most intolerant.

Mr. Wesley evidently seems to have had but one design from the commencement of his ministry, and which he invariably pursued till his spirit returned to God, viz., to be as useful as possible to his fellow creatures, especially with regard to the salvation of their souls. He therefore never said, upon any success which he met with, "It is enough." In this respect also he 'forgot the things behind and reached forth to those before.' The same he continually inculcated upon those who labored with him.

Agreeably to this they have from the beginning gone from place to place; and having formed societies of 'those who turned to God,' (for they take charge of none else) they immediately visited new places, beginning to preach generally in the open air, on a horseblock, or on whatever offered. At length one of the preachers, a Mr. Williams, then zealous for God, crossed the channel and began to preach in Dublin. Multitudes flocked to hear; and for some time there

was much disturbance, chiefly though not wholly from the lower class, who are mostly Romanists. He soon formed a small society, several of whom were happy witnesses of the truth which they had heard, viz., That God does now also 'give the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, to those who repent and believe the gospel.

Mr. Williams wrote an account of his success to Mr. Wesley, who determined to visit Ireland immediately. Accordingly on Tuesday, August the 4th, 1747, he set out from Bristol, and passing through Wales, arrived in Dublin on Sunday the 9th, about ten o'clock in the forenoon. A circumstance almost instantly occurred which he considered as 'a token for good.' I shall relate it in his words:

"Soon after we landed, hearing the bells ringing for church, I went thither directly. Mr. Lunell, the chief member of the society, came to the quay just after I was gone, and left word at the house where our things were, 'He would call again at one.' He did so, and took us to his house. About three I wrote a line to the curate of St. Mary's, who sent me word, 'He should be glad of my assistance.' So I preached there (another gentleman reading prayers) to as gay and senseless a congregation as I ever saw. After sermon Mr. R. thanked me very affectionately, and desired I would favor him with my company in the morning.

"*Monday the* 10*th*.—I met the society at five, and at six preached on, 'Repent ye, and believe the gospel.' The room, large as it was, would not contain the people, who all seemed to taste the good word.

"Between eight and nine I went to Mr. R. the curate of St. Mary's. He professed abundance of good will, commended my sermon in strong terms, and begged he might see me again the next morning. But at the same time he professed the most rooted prejudice against lay-preachers, or preaching out of a church; and said the archbishop of

Dublin was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocess.

"I went to our brethren, that we might pour out our souls before God. I then went straight to wait upon the archbishop myself; but he was gone but of town.

"In the afternoon a gentleman desired to speak with me. He was troubled that it was not with him as in times past. At the age of fourteen the power of God came mightily upon him, constraining him to rise out of bed to pour out his prayers and tears, from a heart overflowed with love and joy in the Holy Ghost. For some months he scarce knew whether he was in the body, continually walking and talking with God. He has now an abiding peace; but cannot rest till the love of God again fills his heart."

The house then used for preaching was situate in Marlborough-street, and was originally designed for a Lutheran church. It contained about four hundred people; but four or five times the number might stand in the yard, which was very spacious. An immense multitude assembled there to hear him on Monday evening; among whom were many of the rich, and ministers of all denominations. He spoke strongly and closely on, 'The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; and observes, that no person seemed offended. All, for the present at least, seemed convinced that he 'spake as the oracles of God.'

The next day he waited on the archbishop. They conversed for two or three hours, in which time he answered an abundant of objections. He continued to preach morning and evening to large congregations, and had more and more reason to hope they would not all be unfruitful hearers.

Having examined the society, which then consisted of about two hundred and eighty members, and explained at large the rules, (already mentioned,) he sailed for England,

leaving Mr. Williams and Mr. Trembath to take care of his little flock. Many of these, he observes, were strong in faith, and of an exceeding teachable spirit; and therefore, on this account, should be watched over with the more care, as being almost equally susceptible of good or ill impressions.—Soon after this he published an address to the Roman Catholics: a very small tract, but clearly stating the points wherein we agree, and wherein we differ; and equally conspicuous for argument and temper.

The society in Dublin enjoyed their sunshine but for a little time. A persecution commened, in which Mr. Trembath, in a letter to Mr. Wesley, makes the following observations: "I believe this persecution was permitted for good, that we might not trust in an arm of flesh. We thought that the magistrates would do us justice; but in this we were disappointed. It likewise drives us all to prayer and watchfulness, and also causes us to love each other better than ever; so that we are like sheep driven by the wolf into the fold. When we went out we carried our lives in our hands: but all this did not hinder us once from meeting together at the usual hours. The society still increased, and those who had the root in themselves stood like marble pillars; and, by the grace of God, were resolved rather to die with Christ, than to deny him. All the city was in an uproar: some said, 'It is a shame; the men do no harm:' others said, 'The dogs deserve all to be hanged.' Blessed be God, we walk unhurt in fire! Now we can literally say, we live by faith: and the less we have of human help, the more we shall have of divine."

Dublin had been long remarkable for a bad police. Frequent robberies, and sometimes murder, were committed in the streets at an early hour in the evening, with impunity. The Ormond and Liberty mob, (that is, the butchers of Ormond market, and the weavers of the Liberty, a part of Dublin so called,) would sometimes meet, and fight till one or

more persons were killed. On one occasion the mob had beat a constable to death in the street, and hung the body up in triumph! There was no vigor in the magistrates, and their power was despised. It is no wonder that the Methodists, at their first coming, were roughly handled in such a place as this;' but it is wonderful that they so soon got a firm footing, and passed through their sufferings with so little injury. On Mr. C. Wesley's arrival here, he observes, "The first news we heard was, that the little flock stands fast in the storm of persecution, which arose as soon as my brother left them. The Popish mob broke open their room, and destroyed all before them. Some of them are sent to Newgate; others bailed. What will be the event we know not, till we see whether the grand jury will find the bill."—He afterward informs us that the grand jury threw out the bill, and thus gave up the Methodists to the fury of a licentious Popish mob. He says, "God has called me to suffer affliction with his people. I began my ministry with,' Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, &c.'—September 10, I met the society, and the Lord knit our hearts together in love stronger than death. We both wept and rejoiced for the consolation. God hath sent me, I trust, to confirm these souls, and to keep them together in the present distress."

Mr. C. Wesley continued his labors in Dublin till February 9, 1748, when he took an excursion into the country. The few preachers who were in Ireland, had already introduced the gospel into several country towns. Mr. C. Wesley came to Tyrrel's Pass, where he met a large and well-disposed congregation. "Few such feasts," says he, "have I had since I left England: it refreshed my body more than meat or drink. God has begun a great work here. The people of Tyrrel's Pass were wicked to a proverb; swearers, drunkards, sabbath-breakers, thieves, &c.' from time immemorial. But now the scene is changed; not an oath is heard, nor a drunkard seen among them; *aperto vivitur*

*horto.** They are turned from darkness to light, and near one hundred are joined in society."

Mr. J. Wesley, accompanied by Messrs. Meriton and Swindells, arrived in Dublin in the spring of the year 1748. before his brother Charles sailed for England.† He no longer confined himself to the house, but preached on Oxmantown-Green, adjoining the barrack. He preached also at Newgate; and after a few days spent in Dublin, he visited many parts of the country. In several places he was constrained to preach in the open air, by reason of the multitude that attended. Many of the soldiers also, in every place, gladly heard the word, and forty troopers were at this time members of the society at Philipstown. In many of the towns in the provinces of Leinster and Munster, and in some of Connaught, societies were formed, which have increased continually since that time, and the members of which have adorned the doctrine of God their Savior.

On his return to Dublin, he spent some days there previous to his departure for England. On one of these days, while he was preaching on the Green near the barrack, a man cried out, "Aye he is a Jesuit, that's plain." To which a Popish priest, who happened to be near, replied, "No he is not. I would to God he was."

Soon after he sailed, the zealous mob, who for some time had greatly incommoded those who attended at the preach-

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* They live in the open garden.

"Christ removes the flaming sword,
Calls us back, from Eden driven!"

† Nearly forty years ago that excellent man, Mr. Edwards of Bedfordbury, (Mr. Fletcher's leader,) told me, that he and the other leaders in London lamented that Mr. Wesley and his brother should spend so much time in Ireland, and send so many preachers thither. Mr. Wesley replied, "Have patience, and Ireland will repay you."—"We could hardly think it," said the good man, "but when Mr. Walsh came, we saw that Mr. Wesley's faith was better than ours."

ing-house in Marlborough-street, made an attack in form. They abused the preacher and the congregation in a very gross manner. They then pulled down the pulpit, and carrying it with the benches into the street, made a large fire of them, round which they shouted for several hours.

Those preachers who remained in the kingdom continued their labor with much success. Mr. Swindells visited Limerick, one of the most considerable cities in the province of Munster. The Lord much blessed his labors there, so that a society was soon formed; and the religious impression was so great on the inhabitants in general, that Mr. Wesley observes, on his visit to this city the following year, that he found no opposition; but every one seemed to say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!'

But in Cork the scene was very different. For more than three months a riotous mob, headed by a ballad-singer whose name was Butler, had declared open war against these new reformers, and all who attended their preaching. To give a detail of their violence would be almost too shocking to human nature. They fell upon men and women, old and young, with clubs and swords, and beat and wounded them in a dreadful manner. But they were not content with thus abusing the people when attending the preaching. They surrounded their houses, wounded their customers, broke their windows, and threatened to pull their houses down, unless they would engage to leave this way! The common epithets used on those occasions by Butler and his party, were *heretic dogs* and *heretic b–tch–s:* and several even of the magistrates rather encouraged than strove to prevent these disorders.

In the midst of this brutality and injustice, religion shed her cheering light, and diffused happiness almost at the gates of the city.

It was now generally believed there would be no more riots in Cork. But the flame of persecution was not yet ex-

tinct. Mr. Wesley arrived in Ireland in the month of April, 1750; and having preached in Dublin and the intermediate places, he proceeded to Cork; and at the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman Pembroke, came to his house. On the morrow, being the Lord's day, he went about eight o'clock to Hammond's Marsh, being informed that the usual place of preaching would by no means contain those who desired to hear. The congregation was large and attentive. A few of the rabble gathered at a distance; but by little and little they drew near, and mixed with the congregation: and he preached to as quiet and orderly an assembly as he could have met with in any church in England or Ireland.

In the afternoon, a report being spread abroad that the mayor designed to hinder his preaching on the Marsh in the evening, he desired Mr. Skelton and Mr. Jones to wait upon him and inquire concerning it. Mr. Skelton asked if Mr. Wesley's preaching there would be disagreeable to him? Adding, "Sir, if it is, Mr. Wesley will not do it."—He replied warmly, "Sir, I'll have no mobbing."—Mr. Skelton said, "Sir, there was none this morning."—He answered "There was. Are there not churches and meeting-houses enough? I will have no more mobs and riots."—Mr. Skelton replied, "Sir, neither Mr. Wesley nor they that heard him, made either mobs or riots."—He then answered plainly, "I will have no more preaching; and if Mr. Wesley attempts to preach I am prepared for him."

He, however, began preaching in the house soon after five. Mr. Mayor in the mean time was walking in the exchange, and giving orders to the town drummers and to his sergeants —doubtless to go down and keep the peace! They accordingly came down to the house, with an innumerable mob attending them. They continued drumming, and Mr. Wesley continued preaching, till he had finished his discourse. When he came out the mob immediately closed him in. Observing one of the sergeants standing by, he desired him to

keep the king's peace: but he replied, "Sir, I have no orders to do that." As soon as he came into the street the rabble threw whatever came to hand. But all went by him, or flew over his head; nor did one thing touch him. He walked on straight through the midst of the rabble, looking every man before him in the face; and they opened on the right and left till he came near Dant's Bridge. A large party had taken possession of this, one of whom was bawling out, "Now, hey, for the Romans!" When he came up *they* likewise shrunk back, and he walked through them to Mr. Jenkin's house. But a Romanist stood just within the door and endeavored to hinder him from going in; till one of the mob, aiming at him, but missing, knocked down the Romanist. He then went in, and God restrained the wild beasts so that not one attempted to follow him.

Monday, 21.—He rode on to Bandon. From three in the afternoon till past seven, the mob of Cork marched in grand procession, and then burnt him in effigy near Dant's Bridge.

Shortly after these riots in Cork, Butler went to Waterford, and raised disturbances in that city. But happening to quarrel with some who were as ready to shed blood as himself, he lost his right arm in the fray. Being thus disabled, the wretch dragged on the remainder of his life in unpitied misery. His fellow rioters at Cork were intimidated by the soldiers in garrison, may of whom began now to attend the preaching. At length peace was restored; and the next time Mr. Wesley visited that city he preached without disturbance. A large preaching house was soon after built, in which the people quietly assembled.

There are few places where religion has prospered more than in Cork. 'Being reviled for the name of Christ, the Spirit of Glory and of God has rested upon them;' and many have been the living and dying witnesses of the power of true religion. The principal inhabitants have been long convinced of the folly and wickedness of the authors and

encouragers of those persecutions: and, on a late visit, the mayor invited Mr. Wesley to the mansion house, and seemed to consider his company as an honor.

Mr. Wesley continued his labors without intermission. He generally preached three or four, and sometimes five times in the day; and often rode thirty or forty, sometimes fifty miles. Thus did he labor while he could ride on horseback; nor do we believe there could be an instance found, during the space of forty years, wherein the severest weather hindered him for one day!

Many were the "hair-breadth escapes" which he experienced during that time, and which he has noted in his journals with lively gratitude to Him who numbers the hairs of our head. In this year (1750) he records a remarkable one.

"I took horse," says he, "in Bristol for Wick, where I had appointed to preach at three in the afternoon. I was riding by the wall through St. Nicholas' gate,) my horse having been brought to the house where I dined,) just as a cart turned short from St. Nicholas-street, and came swiftly down the hill. There was just room to pass between the wheel of it and the wall; but that space was taken up by the cartman. I called to him to go back, or I must ride over him. But the man, as if deaf, walked straight forward. This obliged me to hold back my horse. In the mean time, the shaft of the cart came full against his shoulder, with such a shock as beat him to the ground. He shot me forward over his head, as an arrow out of a bow, where I lay with my arms and legs, I know not how, stretched out in a line close to the wall. The wheel ran by close to my side, but only dirtied my clothes. I found no flutter of spirit, but the same composure as if I had been sitting in my study. When the cart was gone I rose. Abundance of people gathered round, till a gentleman desired me to step into his shop. After cleaning myself a little, I took horse again.

and was at Wick by the time appointed. I returned to Bristol, (where the report of my being killed had spread far and wide,) time enough to praise God in the great congregation, and to preach on 'Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.'"

He now visited, with those that labored with him, many parts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, where he had never been before. He also visited Plymouth, and many other places in the west; and in every place, *the work of God prospered.* Mr. Wesley observes, "This is no cant word: it means 'the conversion of sinners from sin to holiness.'" But still they were obliged in many parts to carry their lives in their hands. Some instances of this have been related already. I shall mention one more in his own words.

"After preaching at Oakhill, a village in Somersetshire, I rode on to Shepton Mallet, but found the people all under a strange consternation. A mob they said was hired, and made sufficiently drunk to do all manner of mischief. I began preaching between four and five, and none hindered or interrupted at all. We had a blessed opportunity, and the hearts of many were exceedingly comforted. I wondered what was become of the mob. But we were quickly informed they mistook the place, imagining I should alight (as I used to do,) at Wm. Stone's house, and had summoned by drum all their forces together, to meet at my coming. But Mr. Swindells, (one of the preachers,) innocently carrying me to the other end of the town, they did not find their mistake till I had done preaching.

"However, they attended us from the preaching house to William Stone's, throwing dirt, stones, and clods, in abundance; but they could not hurt us, only Mr. Swindells had a little dirt on his coat, and I had a few specks on my hat.

"After we had gone into the house, they began throwing large stones in order to break the door. But perceiving

this would require some time, they dropped that design for the present. They then broke all the tiles on the penthouse, over the door, and poured in a shower of stones at the windows. One of their captains, in his great zeal, had followed us into the house, and was now shut in with us. He did not like this, and would fain have got out, but it was not possible. So he kept as close to me as he could, thinking himself safest when he was near me. But staying a little behind, (when I went up two pair of stairs, and stood close on one side where we were a little sheltered,) a large stone struck him on the forehead, and the blood spouted out like a stream. He cried out, 'O sir, are we to die to-night? What must I do? What must I do?'—I said, 'Pray to God. He is able to deliver you from all danger.' He took my advice, and began praying, I believe, as he had scarce ever done before.

Mr. Swindells and I then went to prayer; after which I told him, 'We must not stay here. We must go down immediately.'—He said, 'Sir, we cannot stir, you see how the stones fly about.'—I walked straight through the room and down the stairs; and not a stone came in till we were at the bottom. The mob had just broken open the door when we came into the lower room; and while they burst in at one door, we walked out at the other. Nor did one man take any notice of us, though we were within five yards of each other.

"They filled the house at once, and proposed setting it on fire. But one of them remembering that his own house was next, persuaded them not to do it. Hearing one of them cry out, 'They are gone over the grounds,' I thought the hint was good. So we went over the grounds, to the far end of the town, where one waited, and undertook to guide us to Oakhill.

"I was riding on in Shepton-lane, it being now quite dark, when he cried out, 'Come down! come down from

the bank!' I did as I was desired; but the bank being high, and the side almost perpendicular, I came down all at once, my horse and I tumbling one over another. But we both rose unhurt. In less than an hour we came to Oakhill, and the next morning to Bristol."

September 8, he came to London, and received the following account of the death of one of the traveling preachers: "John Jane was never well after walking from Epworth to Hainton, on an exceeding hot day, which threw him into a fever. But he was in great peace and love, even to those who greatly wanted love to him. He was sometime at Alice Shadforth's house, with whom he daily talked of the things of God, spent much time in private prayer, and joined likewise with her in prayer several times in a day. On Friday, Aug. 24, he sat in the evening by the fireside; about six he fetched a deep sigh, and never spoke more. He was alive till the same time on Saturday, when, without any struggle, or sign of pain, with a smile on his face, he passed away. His last words were, 'I find the love of God in Christ Jesus.'

Mr. C. Wesley was now become, in a great degree, a domestic man; and the want of that activity which we have heretofore seen in his labors of love, much impaired his own comforts and laid him open to strong temptation. Mr. John Wesley has remarked to me, "While my brother remained with me he was joyous in his spirit, and his labor saddened him not. But when he departed from that activity to which the Lord called him, and in which he so greatly blessed him, his spirit became depressed; and being surrounded with 'croakers,' he often looked through the same clouds which enveloped *them*."

Having met in London, the two brothers went down to Shoreham in November, and talked the matter over in the presence of Mr. Perronet, whom Mr. C. Wesley used to call "our arch-bishop." A less exceptionable *daysman* could

not have been found; a man full of faith and love, and entirely devoted to God and to his work. He had fitted up a large outer room in the parsonage-house, (which I had the privilege of visiting,) where the preachers used to meet the pious people of the parish: the good man rejoicing in all that he heard, and in all the good that was done. In his presence the two brothers expressed their entire satisfaction in the end which each had in view; namely, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. They both acknowledged the sincerity of each, in desiring union between themselves as the means to that end; and after much conversation they both agreed to act in concert with respect to the preachers, so that neither of them should admit or refuse any but such as both admitted or refused.—About six weeks afterward they were at Shoreham again, and then signed the following articles of agreement:—

"With regard to the preachers we agree,

"1. That none shall be permitted to preach in any of our societies till he be examined both as to his grace and gifts: at least by the assistant, who, sending word to us, may by our answer admit him a local preacher.

"2. That such preacher be not immediately taken from his trade, but be exhorted to follow it with all diligence.

"3. That no person shall be received as a traveling preacher, or be taken from his trade, by either of us alone, but by both of us conjointly, giving him a note under both our hands.

"4. That neither of us will readmit a traveling preacher laid aside, without the consent of the other.

"5. That if we should ever disagree in our judgment, we will refer the matter to Mr. Perronet.

"6. That we will entirely be patterns of all we expect from every preacher; particularly of zeal, diligence, and punctuality in the work; by constantly preaching and meeting the societies; by visiting yearly, Ireland, Cornwall and

the north; and, in general, by superintending the whole work and every branch of it with all the strength which God shall give us. We agree to the above written till this day next year, in the presence of Mr. Perronet.

"JOHN WESLEY.
"CHARLES WESLEY."

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Mr. John Wesley was prevailed upon, with some difficulty, to sign these articles." But he soon found that, from the causes already mentioned, his brother was unable to execute so large an engagement with any efficiency. Mr. J. Wesley may, therefore, from this time be considered as the sole director of the work: not from the heathenish principle which Dr. Whitehead imputes to him, without any evidence, viz. that he would be *aut Cæsar, aut nullus*,* but from necessity: he could not admit of any *partner* who would not superintend the whole work or every part of it, as above stated. Mr. C. Wesley, however, occasionally assisted his brother, especially in London and Bristol, and his ministrations were always acceptable and profitable to the people.

Mr. Wesley had hitherto enjoyed remarkable health, considering his great and continued labors and exposures of every kind. But, October 19, 1753, soon after his return to London he was taken ill. In a short time his complaint put on the appearance of an ague. Before he was perfectly recovered he repeatedly catched cold, and was presently threatened with a rapid consumption.—November 26, Dr. Fothergill told him he must not stay in town one day longer: that if any thing would do him good it must be the country air, with rest, asses' milk, and riding daily. In con-

* He would be supreme or he would be nobody.

sequence of this advice he retired to Lewisham, to the house of his friend Mr. Blackwell, the banker. Here, not knowing how it might please God to dispose of him, and wishing "to prevent vile panegyric" in case of death, he wrote as follows:—

HERE LIETH

THE BODY OF JOHN WESLEY,

A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE BURNING:

WHO DIED OF A CONSUMPTION IN THE 51ST YEAR OF HIS AGE; NOT LEAVING, AFTER HIS DEBTS ARE PAID, TEN POUNDS BEHIND HIM; PRAYING,

God be merciful to me an unprofitable servant!

He ordered that this inscription, if any, should be placed on his tombstone.

Mr. C. Wesley was roused by his brother's illness, and exerted himself to supply his place. Sunday, July 14, he came to Norwich, and at seven o'clock in the morning took the field. He preached on Hog-hill to about two thousand hearers, his brother standing by him, then in some degree amended in his health. A drunkard or two were troublesome, but more out of mirth than malice. They afterward went to church; and the people, both in the streets and at the cathedral, were remarkably civil. He adds, "The lessons, psalms, epistles, and gospel, were very encouraging. The anthem made our hearts rejoice: 'O pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces! For my brethren and companions' sake will I now say, Peace be within thee! Because of the house of the Lord our God, will I seek thy good.'—We received the sacrament at the hands of the bishop. In the afternoon I went to St. Peter's, and at five o'clock to Hog-hill, where it was computed that ten thousand persons were present. Again I preached repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They listened with great seriousness—their hearts were

plainly touched, as some showed by their tears. Who could have thought the people of Norwich would ever more have borne a field preacher? It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. To him be all the glory, who saith, 'I will work, and who shall hinder?'"

'May 6, 1755, the conference began at Leeds. "The point," says Mr. Wesley, "on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large was, *Whether we ought to separate from the Church?* Whatever was advanced on one side or the other was seriously and calmly considered; and on the third day we were *all* fully agreed in that general conclusion, *That, whether it was* LAWFUL *or not, it was no ways* EXPEDIENT."—'In a multitude of counsellors there is safety.'

Mr. Wesley proceeds: "August 6.—I mentioned to our congregation in London a means of increasing serious religion which had been frequently practised by our forefathers, the joining in a covenant to serve God with all our heart and with all our soul. I explained this for several mornings following, and on Friday many of us kept a fast unto the Lord, beseeching him to give us wisdom and strength that we might 'promise unto the Lord our God and keep it.'—On Monday, at six in the evening, we met for that purpose at our chapel in Spitalfields. After I had recited the tenor of the covenant proposed in the words of that blessed man, Richard Alleine, all the people stood up, in token of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred. Such a night I scarce ever knew before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain for ever."—The covenant has been renewed once every year since this period. The practice is now become general.

Whoever seriously considers the foregoing pages, will readily conclude that the work carried on by Mr. Wesley and his assistants was really of God. The great *concern* for religion, which was evident in many thousands who were

before careless or profane; the *impression* made on their minds of the importance of *eternal* things; their being so deeply convinced of the *number* and *heinousness* of their own sins, from which conviction sprung 'fruits meet for repentance;' their being made happy partakers of 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,' and walking in all *holiness*, were demonstrable proofs of this. For is there any name given under heaven, whereby men can be *thus* saved, but the name of Christ alone?

But the Lord, at sundry times and in divers places, poured out his Spirit in a remarkable manner. This religious *concern*, these divine *impressions*, and their consequent *fruits*, attended the preaching of God's word in so great a degree upon those occasions, that more were converted in a few months, or even weeks or days at such times, than for several years before. Many parts of these kingdoms have been thus favored at different seasons; but especially about the year 1760, and for some years after. In London particularly, this revival of religion was great and conspicuous: many hundreds were added to the societies, and the word of the Lord was glorified among them.

The city of London had been highly favored from the commencement of Mr. Wesley's labors. He usually resided there during the winter months. There were now several chapels in it under his direction. In some of these, on every Lord's day, the service of the Church of England was performed, and the Lord's supper administered. Mr. Maxfield, whom we have already mentioned, was ordained by Dr. Barnard, then bishop of Londonderry, who resided for some time at Bath for the benefit of his health. The bishop received him at Mr. Wesley's recommendation, saying, "Sir, I ordain you, to assist that good man, that he may not work himself to death." He did assist Mr. Wesley for some years, and was eminently useful.*

* He subsequently separated from Mr. Wesley —*Compiler*.

The doctrines of the Bible, of the Reformation, and of the church of England, were now preached in almost every part of the land. Present *salvation by grace through faith*, and *universal obedience* as the fruit thereof, urged on the consciences of men, caused *practical Christianity* again to revive: and to use the words of a pious and elegant writer,* "Leaning on her fair daughters TRUTH and LOVE, she took a solemn walk through the kingdom, and gave a foretaste of heaven to all that entertained her." "She might," says he, "by this time have turned this favorite isle into a land flowing with spiritual milk and honey, if Apollyon, disguised in his angelic robes, had not played, and did not continue to play, his old (Antinomian) game."

"Many assert that the 'clothing of the king's daughter is of wrought gold:' but few, very few, experience that 'she is all glorious within:' and it is well if many are not bold enough to maintain that she is *all full of corruptions*. With more truth than ever, we may say,

> Ye different sects, who all declare,
> *Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there!*
> Your stronger proofs divinely give,
> And show us where *the Christians* LIVE!
> Your claim, alas! ye cannot prove,
> Ye want the genuine mark of LOVE.

Mr. Wesley had from the beginning borne a faithful testimony against this delusion. In his sermon preached before the university of Oxford, so early as the year 1738, he admitted that the doctrine of *salvation by faith* was often thus abused. "Many," says he, "will now, as in the apostles' days, 'continue in sin that grace may abound.' But their blood is on their own head. The goodness of God ought to lead them to repentance; and so it will those that are

* The late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley, Salop.

sincere of heart." After a trial of more than thirty years, he was abundantly confirmed in this sentiment.

CHAPTER VII.

From the Conference in 1770, to the death of Mr. Wesley, March 2nd, 1791—21 years.

To raise a bulwark against this overflowing of ungodliness, (described in the close of the preceding chapter,) and to prevent it from spreading among the people under his care, the evil principle which occasioned it was taken into consideration, in the conference of the year 1770. Minutes of this conference were soon after published, in which were inserted the following propositions.

"*Take heed to your doctrine.*"

"We said in 1744, 'We have leaned too much toward Calvinism.'—Wherein?

"1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression, therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, upon his authority, that if a man 'is not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will not give him the true riches.'

"2. With regard to *working for life*, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. 'Labor' (ἐργαζεσθε, literally work,) 'for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.' And in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for* as well as *from* life.

"3. We have received it as a maxim, that 'A man is to do nothing *in order to justification*.' Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favor with God, should 'cease from evil, and learn to do well.' So God himself teaches by the prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents, should 'do works meet for repentance.' And if this is not *in order* to find favor, what does he do them for?

"Once more review the whole affair:

"1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?

"He that now believes in Christ with a loving, obedient heart.

"2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

"He that, according to the light he has, 'feareth God and worketh righteousness.'

"3. Is this the same with 'he that is *sincere?*'

"Nearly, if not quite.

"4. Is not this *salvation by works?*

"Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition.**

"5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years?

"I am afraid *about words:* [namely, in some of the foregoing instances.]

"6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded *according to our works*, yea, *because of our works.* How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works?* And how differs this from, *Secundum merita operum?*† which is no more than, *as our works deserve.* Can you split this hair? I doubt, I cannot.

"7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions is drawn from matter of fact. God does, in fact, justify those who, by their own confession, 'neither feared God nor wrought 'righteousness.' Is this an exception to the general rule?

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* That is, '*works meet for repentance;* and *faith* that pleads the *atonement* and the *promises*, and which is therefore called *the work of faith*, and also *justifying faith.* Does God justify any, who, being awakened, do not *thus* work?—We see here, that these Minutes were a death-blow to Antinomianism.

† A common phrase among the ancient fathers.

"It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at all But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own thinking so is no proof. For we know how all that are convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect: [i. e. think their case more hopeless than it really is.]

"8. Does not talking, without proper caution, of a *justified* or *sanctified* STATE tend to mislead men; almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in *one moment!* Whereas, we are every moment *pleasing* or *displeasing* to God, *according to our works:* according to the whole of our present inward tempers, and outward behavior."

It is hardly possible to give a just idea of the noise which these propositions occasioned among the religious professors of the land. Some, whose carnal confidence was shaken by them, cried out amain, "that they were contrary to the gospel, and that Mr. Wesley had in them contradicted all his former declarations." Some even of the truly pious seemed staggered at them; and though they lamented the abuse of Gospel truths, could hardly bear so strong an antidote.

From the days of Augustine, who first introduced the question of the "Divine decrees" to the Christian church, even to the present day, this question has been mooted, and has occasioned much discord. The propositions at the conclusion of the Minutes were sufficient to kindle what before was only jealousy and suspicion, into a flame of contention and strife. The Calvinists took the alarm, and the late honorable and reverend Walter Shirley wrote a circular letter to all the serious clergy and others through the land.

In June, 1771, Mr. Fletcher* sent a copy of this letter to Mr. Wesley, and at the same time wrote as follows:—

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* See plate 8, p. 132; also Appendix, letter E.

"When I left Wales, where I had stood in the gap for peace, I thought my poor endeavors were not altogether in vain. Lady Huntingdon said she would write civilly to you, and desire you to explain yourself about your Minutes. I suppose you had not heard from her; for she wrote me word since that she believed she must not meddle in the affair. Upon receiving yours from Chester, I cut off that part of it where you expressed your belief of, what is eminently called by us, *the doctrine of* FREE GRACE, and sent it to the College, desiring it might be sent to Lady Huntingdon. She hath returned it, with a letter, wherein she expresses the greatest disapprobation of it: the purport of it is, to charge you with tergiversation, (the old accusation of the Antinomians!) and me with being the dupe of your impositions. She hath wrote in stronger terms to her college.

"Things, I hoped, would have remained here; but how am I surprised and grieved to see zeal borrowing the horn of discord, and sounding an alarm through the religious world against you! Mr. H—— called upon me last night and showed me a printed circular letter, which I suppose is or will be sent to the serious clergy and laity through the land. I have received none, as I have lost, I suppose, my reputation of being a *real Protestant*, by what I wrote on your minutes in Wales.

"The following is an exact copy of the printed letter:

"'SIR,—Whereas Mr. Wesley's conference is to be held at Bristol on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon and many other Christian friends, (*real Protestants*,) to have a meeting at Bristol at the same time, of such principal persons, both clergy and layity, and who disapprove of the underwritten Minutes; and as the same are thought injurious to the very *fundamental principles of Christianity*, it is further proposed, that they go in a body to the said conference, and insist up-

on a formal *recantation* of the said Minutes; and, in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their *protest* against them. Your presence, sir, on this occasion is particularly requested: but if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject, to such person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you, whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a dreadful *heresy*, to recommend it to as many of your Christian friends, as well of the Dissenters as of the Established Church, as you can prevail on, to be there: the cause being of so public a nature.

"'I am sir,

"'Your obedient servant,

"'WALTER SHIRLEY.'"

Then followed a postcript, containing the objectionable propositions, &c. &c. After stating this Mr. Fletcher proceeds: "I think it my duty, dear sir, to give you the earliest intelligence of this bold onset: and assure you, that upon the *evangelical* principles mentioned in your last letter to me, I, for one, shall be glad to stand by you and your doctrine to the last, hoping that you will gladly remove stumblingblocks out of the way of the weak, and alter such expressions as may create prejudice in the hearts of those who are inclined to admit it. If you come this way, sir, I will show you the minutes of what I wrote in Wales, in defence of what is called your *dreadful heresy*; for, as to the writing itself, I have it not; Lady H. would never return it to me. Dear sir, we never can make too much of JESUS CHRIST: some may preach and exalt him *out of contention*, but let us do it *willingly and Scripturally*: and the Lord will stand by us. I beg, I entreat him, to stand by you: particularly at this time to give you the *simplicity of the*

dove, and *the wisdom of the serpent;* the condescension of a child, and the firmness of a father.

"I write to Mr. Shirley, to expostulate with him to call in his circular letter. He is the last man who should attack you. His sermons contain propositions much more *heretical* and *anti-Calvinistic* than your Minutes. If my letters have not the desired effect, I shall probably, if you approve of them, and will correct them, publish them for your justification. I find Mr. Ireland is to write, to make you *tamely recant*, without measuring swords, or breaking a pike with our *real Protestants*. I write to him also."

The honorable and reverend Walter Shirley, the brother of the unhappy earl Ferrars, and Chaplain to his sister the pious countess of Huntingdon, was a truly pious man, and affectionately attached for several years to Mr. Wesley, who had been the principal instrument of his conversion. The following letter will clearly show that piety and attachment:

Loughrea, Aug. 21, 1759.

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

"Your obliging and truly Christian letter was welcome to my soul ten thousand thousand times; and brought along with it a warm satisfaction, which could only be exceeded by the pleasure of a personal conversation with you. And I am not without hopes that, when you shall think fit to visit those blessed seminaries of true vital religion in this kingdom of your own planting, you will take an opportunity of honoring this place, and more particularly my house, with the presence of one whose labors in the gospel of my dear master are so eminent.

"I thank you greatly for your Alarm: indeed, the devil could not make use of a more subtle, specious insinuation to dissuade us from pursuing the attack with vigor, than that of Christian prudence. I trust he sees himself baffled

through your timely caution. But alas! what confidence is there to be put in the weakness of man! it is in the Lord's strength alone that I shall be able to triumph over this, and all other temptations.

"I highly honor and love Mr. Berridge, and Mr. Grimshaw. May God bless them with increasing success, that they may 'see the travail of their souls and be satisfied!' and may he endue me with the same noble courage, that his name may be magnified even in this place!

"What will you say, dear sir? Will you not give up every favorable opinion of so unworthy a minister as I am, when I inform you, that though there are many under my charge who confess they have been awakened; yet I dare not boast of any confirmed converts (now living) through my preaching and ministry? I bless my God, however, for one dear soul, who departed in peace.

"I am now about to leave them for two or three months, being in a very bad state of bodily health, and advised to go to Bath. Let me entreat your earnest prayers to the God of all grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that I may not be found an unprofitable servant: and that I may return to my dear parishioners, under the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace.

"That you may finish your course with joy, and in God's good season enter into the full possession of the fruits of your labors, is the sincere prayer of

"Your affectionate brother,

"W. SHIRLEY

"*To the Rev. J. Wesley.*"

A few years after this, Mr. Shirley adopted the creed of his noble sister, and entering into all her views, became the champion of the cause which appeared to them of so much importance to "evangelical truth."

Tuesday, August 6, the conference began at Bristol. On Thursday morning, Mr. Shirley and his friends* were admitted; when a conversation took place for two hours on the subject which occasioned their visit. Though the party had shown much violence in writing, yet the interview with the conference was managed with much temper and moderation. Mr. Wesley showed great love to his old friend. But the party in the nation was so irritated, that all accommodation became hopeless, and it was thought absolutely necessary to publish Mr. Fletcher's letters. On the 14th, Mr. Wesley wrote the following letter to Lady Huntingdon:

"My dear Lady,

"When I received the former letter from your ladyship, I did not know how to answer: and I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also that with which your ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your ladyship's of the 2nd instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer; only I waited till the hurry of the conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly. I know your ladyship would not 'servilely deny the truth.' I think, neither would I; especially that great truth, JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies, (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God,) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation; yea, for which I have so often hazarded my life, and by the grace of God will do again. The principles established in the Minutes I apprehend to be no way contrary to this; or to that faith, that consistent plan of doctrine, which was 'once delivered to the saints.' I believe whoever calmly

* The Calvinistic ministers, who were summoned by Mr. Shirley, were not willing to enter the lists in the way that he had appointed; and therefore the good man was attended only by a few of the Countess's students from her college at Trevecka.

considers Mr. Fletcher's letters, will be convinced of this. I fear, therefore, "zeal against those principles, is no less than zeal against the truth, and against the *honor* of our Lord. The preservation of HIS honor appears so sacred to me, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count all things loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed letters are answered, I must think every thing spoken against those Minutes is totally destructive of HIS *honor*, and a palpable affront to HIM, both as our Prophet and Priest, but more especially as the King of his people. Those letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honor of our Lord, largely prove that the minutes lay no other foundation than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed it would be amazing that God should at this day prosper my labors as much, if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was 'establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man's salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of our Established Church, and all other Protestant Churches.' This is a charge indeed! But I plead, *Not Guilty!* And till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself,

"My dear lady,

"Your ladyship's affectionate, but much injured servant.

"JOHN WESLEY."

The controversy now fully commenced, and was continued for some time, but very prudently committed almost wholly to Mr. Fletcher; who managed it with astonishing temper and success. Indeed, the temper of this gentleman did not lead him to polemic divinity. He was devout and pious to a degree seldom equaled since the days of the apostles. But being urged into this controversy by the love

of truth, and reverence for Mr. Wesley, he displayed great knowledge of his subject, and a most happy *manner* of treating it. In his hands the ablest of his antagonists were as the lion in the hands of Samson. He demonstrated that those propositions were equally agreeable to Scripture, reason, and the writings of the soundest, even of the Calvinistic divines. He largely showed, that as *the day of judgment* differs from *the day of conversion*, so must the conditions of *justification*. That, as in the one we are considered as *mere sinners*, and raised out of guilt and misery, by an act of God's mercy, through faith in the merits of his son: so, in the other, we are considered as members of the mystical body of Christ; and being enabled by his grace to do works acceptable to God, we are justified in that awful day by the *evidence* though not the *merit* of those works, inward and outward; and yet that we are indebted for *both* to that glorious act of divine love, proclaimed by St. Paul, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' And lastly, that the propositions in question secured the one without at all weakening the other.

In all the controversies in which Mr. Wesley had hitherto been concerned, he stood alone. In this he had but little to do. He wrote one or two small tracts; but, as the reviewers of that day observed, he soon retired from the field, and went quietly on in his labor, happy in being succeeded by so able an auxiliary. Mr. Fletcher abounded in time as well as talents for the work. He equally excelled in temper and in skill. And while he exposed the errors of his mistaken opponents, he did honor to their piety. He died in the year 1785, lamented by all the lovers of true religion and useful learning, that were acquainted either with his person or his writings. My admiration of his character would lead me to speak much more concerning him, had not his Life been published; to that I refer my readers.

From this time Mr. Wesley was but little troubled by the advocates for Absolute Predestination. Mr. Fletcher's Works have been a standing answer to all those who assert it; as well as highly useful to those who have been troubled concerning questions on this subject. They are published in nine volumes octavo, and are well worthy the attention of all serious persons, who will find therein 'the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; the truth as it is in Jesus.'

An order had been made by the house of lords in May, this year, 1776, "That the commissioners of his majesty's excise do write circular letters to all such persons whom they have reason to suspect to have plate, as also to those who have not paid regularly the duty on the same," &c.—In consequence of this order, the accomptant-general for household plate sent Mr. Wesley, in September, a copy of the order, with the following letter:—

"REVEREND SIR,

"As the commissioners cannot doubt but you have plate, for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry, they have directed me to send you the above copy of the lords' order, and to inform you they expect that you forthwith make due entry of all your plate; such entry to bear date from the commencement of the plate-duty, or from such time as you have owned, used, had, or kept any quantity of silver plate, chargeable by the act of parliament; as in default hereof the board will be obliged to signify your refusal to their lordships.

"N. B. An immediate answer is desired."

Mr. Wesley answered as follows:—

"SIR,

"I have two silver tea-spoons at London, and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present; and I

shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread. "I am, sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The year 1784 is remarkable in the annals of Methodism, 1. For the solidity given to its affairs by the deed of declaration, enrolled in chancery, whereby the numerous chapels of the connexion were secured to the people for the purposes for which they had been built: and, 2. For the advancement of its spiritual privileges, by giving a full Christian ministry to the societies in America, just then become independent of the mother country.

The deed of declaration is dated February 28, 1784. It is entitled, "The Rev. John Wesley's Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the People called Methodists:" and, in the attested copy, is said to be "Enrolled in his majesty's high court of chancery."

Dr. Whitehead observes, "Mr. Charles Wesley had a weak body and a poor state of health during the greatest part of his life. I believe he laid the foundation of both at Oxford, by too close application to study and abstinence from food. He rode much on horseback, which probably contributed to lengthen out life to a good old age. I visited him several times in his last sickness, and his body was, indeed, reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others—unaffected humility and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace."

A few days before his death he composed the following lines. Having been quiet and silent for some time, he called Mrs. Wesley to him, and bid her write as he dictated:

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem ?*
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;
O could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity!

Thus died, March 29, 1788, aged seventy-nine years and three months, the truly reverend CHARLES WESLEY. He was buried, April 5, in Marybone churchyard, at his own desire. The pall was supported by eight clergymen of the Church of England. On his tombstone are the following lines, written by himself on the occasion of the death of one of his friends: they could not be more aptly applied to any person than to Mr. Charles Wesley:

With poverty of spirit bless'd,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heaven!
Thy labors of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!

The long life graciously dispensed to those brothers in the flesh and in the Lord, was a blessing to the people under their care. The want of the personal superintendence of Mr. C. Wesley, in his latter years, was but little felt, while his brother continued in the full enjoyment of his vast powers. But the time drew near when he also must prove, that 'it is appointed unto men once to die.' This awful hour began now to be very generally anticipated, accompanied with inquiries concerning the probable consequences of his

* Viz. from that distressing feeblenoss: the smile of Christ would thus redeem his feeble dying nature.

death to that great work of which he had been the father, and still continued the chief instrument. He alone seemed without carefulness. That it was *a work of God*, and consequently that it would no more come to an end than the *word* that was given, and by which it had been formed, seemed never for a moment to depart from his mind. That his death must be sudden, was a very general thought; "for, if the people apprehend danger, they will keep him here while prayer will be heard." Careful to do the work of Him that sent him, all other care he cast upon Him in whom is the life of man.

On his birth-day, (June 28, 1788,) Mr. Wesley observes, "I this day enter on my eighty-sixth year. And what cause have I to praise God, as for a thousand spiritual blessings, so for bodily blessings also! How little have I suffered yet, by 'the rush of numerous years!' It is true I am not so *agile* as I was in time past: I do not run or walk so fast as I did. My *sight* is a little decayed: my left eye is grown dim, and hardly serves me to read. I have daily some pain in the ball of my right eye, as also in my right temple, (occasioned by a blow received some months since,) and in my right shoulder and arm, which I impute partly to a sprain and partly to the rheumatism. I find likewise some decay in my memory with regard to names, and things lately past; but not at all with regard to what I have read or heard twenty, forty, or sixty years ago. Neither do I find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite, (though I want but a third part of the food I did once,) nor do I feel any such thing as weariness, either in traveling or preaching. And I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily, and I believe as correctly, as ever.

"To what cause can I impute this, that I am as I am? First, doubtless, to the power of God, fitting me for the work to which I am called, as long as he pleases to continue me therein; and next, subordinately to this, to the prayers of his children.

"May we not impute it as inferior means:

"1. To my constant exercise and change of air?

"2. To my never having lost a night's sleep, sick or well, on land or at sea, since I was born?

"3. To my having sleep at command, so that whenever I feel myself almost worn out, I call it and it comes, day or night?

"4. To my having constantly, for above sixty years, risen at four in the morning?

"5. To my constant preaching at five in the morning, for above fifty years?

"6. To my having had so little pain in my life, and so little sorrow, or anxious care?

"Even now, though I find pain daily in my eye, or temple, or arm, yet it is never violent, and seldom lasts many minutes at a time.

"Whether or not this is sent to give me warning that I am shortly to quit this tabernacle I do not know; but be it one way or the other, I have only to say,

My remnant of days
I spend to his praise
Who died the whole world to redeem:
Be they many or few,
My days are his due,
And they all are devoted to him!"

It had been reported that Mr. Charles Wesley had said a little before he died, that his brother would outlive him but one year. Mr. Wesley did not pay much attention to this, but he seemed to think, that considering his years, and the symptoms of decay which he had marked in himself, such an event was highly probable. Yet he made not the least alteration in his manner of living, or in his labors. He often said to me, during that year, "Now what ought I to do in case I am to die this year? I do not see what I can do

but to go on in my labor just as I have done hitherto." And in his Journal he remarks, "If this is to be the last year of my life, I hope it will be the best. I am not careful about it, but heartily receive the advice of the angel in Milton,

'How *well* is thine: how *long* permit to heaven.'"

In conversing on this subject, before he left London, he observed to me, "Mr. (afterward Sir) James Stonehouse said, many years ago, that my brother and I should die in the harness. My brother did not, but I believe I shall."

On the first day of the following year, (1790,) he remarks: "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim; my write hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day. My motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labor. I can preach and write still."

Being in the house with him when he wrote thus, I was greatly surprised. I knew it must be as he said; but I could not imagine his weakness was so great. He still rose at his usual hour, four o'clock, and went through the many duties of the day, not indeed with the same apparent vigor, but without complaint, and with a degree of resolution that was astonishing. He would still, as he afterwards remarks, "do a little for God before he dropped into the dust."

I should greatly rejoice to be able to testify that his days of weakness were days of uninterrupted tranquility. That he might enjoy even more than

"The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy,"

was certainly the wish of every benevolent mind. God had made all those who had been his enemies in years past, to be at peace with him. But he had still to contend with that jealousy, which 'is cruel as the grave,' and never to be satisfied.

He often observed, that in a course of fifty years, he had never, either *premeditatedly* or *willingly* varied from the Church of England in one article, either of doctrine or discipline; but that through *necessity* not *choice*, he had slowly and warily, and with as little offence as possible, varied in some points of discipline, by preaching in the fields, by extemporay prayer, by employing lay-preachers, by forming and regulating societies, and by holding yearly conferences; but that he did none of these things till he was convinced of the necessity of them, and could no longer omit them but at the peril of his soul. And his constant wish and prayer was, that all who labored with him, or were under his care, might herein tread in his steps.

On Thursday the 17th of February, 1791, he preached at Lambeth. When he came home he seemed not to be well: and being asked, How he did? he said, He believed he had caught cold.

Friday the 18*th.*—He read and wrote as usual, and preached at Chelsea in the evening. But he was obliged to stop once or twice, and to inform the people his cold so affected his voice as to prevent his speaking without those necessary pauses.

Saturday the 19*th.*—He filled up most of his time with reading and writing, though his fever and weakness seemed evidently increasing. At dinner he desired a friend to read to him three or four chapters out of the book of Job. He rose (according to custom) early the next morning, but utterly unfit for his sabbath-day's exercise. At seven o'clock he was obliged to lie down, and slept between three and four hours. When he awoke he said, "I have not had such a comfortable sleep this fortnight past." In the afternoon he lay down again, and slept an hour or two: afterwards two of his own discourses on our Lord's *Sermon on the Mount*, were read to him, and in the evening he came down to supper.

Monday the 21*st.*—He seemed much better; and though his friends tried to dissuade him from it, would keep an engagement made some time before to dine at Twickenham. When he returned home he seemed better: and on Tuesday went on with his usual work; and preached in the evening at the chapel, in the City-road.

On Wednesday he went to Leatherhead, and preached to a small company on 'Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call ye upon him, while he is near.' Here ended the ministerial labors of this man of God. On Thursday he stopped at Mr. Wolff's at Balaam. At this place he was cheerful; and seemed nearly as well as usual, till Friday about breakfast time, when he grew very heavy. About eleven o'clock he returned home; and, having sat down in his room, desired to be left alone, and not to be interrupted for half an hour by any one.

When the limited time was expired, some mulled wine was given him. He drank a little, and seemed sleepy; but in a few minutes threw it up, and said, "I must lie down." He accordingly was put to bed, and lay most of the day, having a quick pulse and a burning fever.

Saturday the 26*th.*—He continued much the same; spoke but little, and if roused to answer a question, or take a little refreshment, (which was seldom more than a spoonful at a time,) he soon dozed again.

On Sunday morning he got up, took a cup of tea, and seemed much better. When sitting in his chair he looked quite cheerful, and repeated the latter part of that verse in the Scripture Hymns on 'Forsake me not, when my strength faileth:'

Till glad I lay this body down,
Thy servant, Lord, attend,
And O! my life of mercy crown
With a triumphant end!

Soon after, in a most emphatical manner, he said, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.' Some who were then present, speaking rather too much to him, he tried to exert himself, but was soon exhausted and obliged to lie down. After a while he looked up, and said, "Speak to me, I cannot speak."—On which one of the company said, "Shall we pray with you, Sir?"—He earnestly replied, "Yes." And while they prayed, his whole soul seemed engaged with God, for an answer, and he added a hearty AMEN.

About half after two he said, "There is no need for more than what I said at Bristol. My words then were,

I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!"*

One said, "Is this the present language of your heart, and do you now feel as you then did?" He replied, "Yes." When the same person repeated,

"Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own;"

and added, "'Tis enough. He, our precious Immanuel, has purchased, has promised all;" he earnestly replied, "He is

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* At the Bristol conference in the year 1783, Mr. Wesley was taken very ill: neither he nor his friends thought he would recover. From the nature of his complaint, he thought a spasm would probably seize his stomach and occasion sudden death. Under these views of his situation, he said to Mr. Bradford, "I have been reflecting on my past life: I have been wandering up and down between fifty and sixty years, endeavoring in my poor way to do a little good to my fellow creatures; and now, it is probable that there are but a few steps between me and death; and what have I to trust to for salvation? I can see nothing which I have done or suffered that will bear looking at. I have no other plea than this:

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

The sentiment here expressed, and his reference to it in his last sickness, plainly show how steadily he had persevered in the same views of the gospel, with which he set out to preach it.

all! He is all!" and then said, "I will go." Soon after to his niece Miss Wesley, who sat by his bedside, he said, "Sally, have you zeal for God now?" After this the fever was very high, and at times affected his head; but even then, though his head was subject to temporary derangement, his heart seemed wholly engaged in his Master's work.

In the evening he got up again, and while sitting in his chair, he said, "How necessary is it for every one to be on the right foundation!

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

We must be justified by faith and then go on to full sanctification."

He slept most of the following day, and spoke but little; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the churches, the glory of God, and the things pertaining to that kingdom to which he was hastening. Once in a low, but very distinct voice, he said, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus."

He afterwards inquired what the words were on which he preached at Hamstead a short time before. He was told they were these: 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' He repled, "That is the foundation, the only foundation: there is no other." He also repeated three or four times in the space of a few hours, 'We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.'

Tuesday, March 1st.—After a very restless night, (though when asked whether he was in pain, he generally answered "No," and never complained through his whole illness, except once when he felt a pain in his breast when he drew his breath,) he began singing.

All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored!
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord!
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race;
Once more to thy people return,
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.
O! wouldst thou again be made known,
Again in the Spirit descend;
And set up in each of thine own
A kingdom that never shall end!
Thou only art able to bless,
And make the nations obey;
And bid the dire enemy cease,
And bow the whole world to thy sway.

Here his strength failed: but after lying still awhile, he called for a pen and ink. They were brought to him: but those active fingers, which had been the blessed instruments of conveying spiritual consolation and useful instruction to thousands, could no longer perform their office. Some time after, he said, "I want to write: but on the pen's being put into his hand, and the paper held before him, he said, "I cannot." One of the company answered, "Let me write for you, sir: tell me what you would say." "Nothing," replied he, "but that GOD IS WITH US." In the forenoon he said, "I will get up." While they were bringing his clothes, he broke out in a manner which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished all present, in these words:

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.

Happy the man, whose hopes rely
On Israel's God: he made the sky,
And earth and seas with all their train:

His truth for ever stands secure,
He saves th' oppress'd, he feeds the poor,
And none shall find his promise vain.

Another time, he was feebly endeavoring to speak, beginning, "Nature is——Nature is." One that was present, added "Nearly exhausted, but you are entering into a new nature, and into the society of blessed spirits." He answered, "Certainly;" and clasped his hands together, saying, "Jesus!" the rest could not be well heard, but his lips continued moving as in fervent prayer.

When he got into his chair, he appeared to change for death; but, regardless of his dying frame, he said, with a weak voice, "Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those that cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou loosest the tongue." He then sung,

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Who sweetly all agree,—

Here his voice failed him, and after gasping for breath, he said, "Now we have done——Let us all go." He was then laid on the bed from which he rose no more. After lying still, and sleeping a little, he desired those who were present to pray and praise. They knelt down, and the room seemed to be filled with the divine presence. A little after he said, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woolen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." Then, as if done with all below, he again begged they would pray and praise. Several friends that were in the house being called up, they all kneeled down to prayer, at which time his fervor of spirit was visible to every one present. But in particular parts of the prayer, his whole soul seemed to be engaged in a manner which evidently showed how ardently he longed for the full accomplishment of their united desires. And when Mr. Broadbent, who did not long sur-

vive him, was praying in a very expressive manner, that if God was about to take away their father to his eternal rest, he would be pleased to continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline, which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating and establishing in the world; such a degree of fervor accompanied his loud amen, as was every way expressive of his soul's being engaged in the answer of the petitions.

On rising from their knees, he took hold of all their hands, and with the utmost placidness, saluted them and said, "Farewell, farewell."

A little after, a person coming in, he strove to speak, but could not. Finding they could not understand him, he paused a little, and with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, "*The best of all is, God is with us:*" and then lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph, not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart reviving words, "*The best of all is, God is with us.*"

Seeing some persons standing by his bedside, he asked. "Who are these?" and being informed who they were: Mr. Rodgers said, "Sir, we are come to rejoice with you: you are going to receive your crown." "It is the Lord's doing," he replied, "and marvellous in our eyes." On being told that his sister-in-law, Mrs. Wesley, was come, he said, "He giveth his servants rest." He thanked her, as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavored to kiss her. On wetting his lips, he said, "We thank thee, Oh Lord, for these and all thy mercies: bless the Church and King; and grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever!"*

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* This was his constant thanksgiving after meals.

At another time he said, "He causeth his servants to lie down in peace." Then pausing a little, he cried, "The clouds drop fatness!" and soon after, "The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" He then called those present to prayer: and though he was greatly exhausted, he appeared still more fervent in spirit. These exertions were however too much for his feeble frame; and most of the night following, though he often attempted to repeat the psalm before mentioned, he could only utter—

I'll praise——I'll praise——

On Wednesday morning the closing scene drew near. Mr. Bradford, his faithful friend, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was, "Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed, without a lingering groan, this man of God, this beloved pastor of thousands, entered into the joy of his Lord.

At the desire of many friends, his corpse was placed in the New chapel, and remained there the day before his interment.* His face during that time had the trace of a heavenly smile upon it, and a beauty which was admired by all that saw it. The crowds which came to see him, while he lay in his coffin, were so great, that his friends, apprehensive of a tumult if he was interred at the usual time, determined to bury him, contrary to their first resolution, between five and six in the morning; of which no notice was given till late the preceding evening; notwithstanding

* Mr. Southey has repeated, after Mr. Hampson, "That he had a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other; and the old clerical cap on his head." As I was an eye-witness, I may state that there is no truth at all in this account. He had no clerical cap, old or new, in his possession; and his friends had too much sense to put any thing into the hands of a corpse.

which, the intelligence had so far transpired, that some hundreds attended at that early hour. These, with many tears, saw his dear remains deposited in the vault which he had some years before prepared for himself, and for those itinerant preachers who should die in London. From those whom he loved in life, he chose not to be divided in death.

The funeral service was read by the late Rev. Mr. Richardson, who had served him as a son in the gospel for nearly thirty years, and who now lies with him in the same vault. When Mr. Richardson came to that part of the service, "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother," &c. he substituted, with the most tender emphasis, the epithet, "Father," instead of "Brother;" which had so powerful an effect on the congregation, that from silent tears they seemed universally to burst out into loud weeping.

The inscription on the coffin was,

JOHANNES WESLEY, A. M.
Olim. Soc. Coll. Lin. Oxon.
Ob. 2 do. die Martii, 1791.
An. Æt. 88.*

The following was the inscription on his tomb:

To the Memory of
THE VENERABLE JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
Late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.
This great light arose,
(By the singular providence of God,)
To enlighten these nations,
And to revive, enforce, and defend,
The pure apostolical doctrines and practices of the
Primitive Church:

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* John Wesley, Master of Arts, formerly Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, died on the 2d day of March, 1791, in the eighty-eigth year of his age.

Which he continued to do, by his writings and his labors,
For more than half a century:
And, to his inexpressible joy,
Not only beheld their influence extending,
And their efficacy witnessed
In the hearts and lives of many thousands,
As well in the Western World as in these kingdoms:
But also, far above all human power or expectation, lived to see provision
Made, by the singular grace of God,
For their continuance and establishment,
To the joy of future generations!
Reader, if thou art constrained to bless the instrument,
Give God the glory!
After having languished a few days, he at length finished his course
And his life together;
Gloriously triumphing over death,
March 2, An. Dom. 1791,
In the eighty-eighth year of his age.

At the death of Mr. Wesley, the state of Methodism stood thus:—

	Circuits.	Preachers.	Members.
In England,	65	106	52,832
In Ireland,	29	67	14,106
In Wales,	3	7	566
In Scotland,	8	18	1,086
In the Isle of Man,	1	3	2.580
In the Norman Isles,	2	4	498
In the West India Isles,	7	13	4,500
In the British dominions in America,	4	6	800
In the United States of America,	97	198	43,265
Total,	216	511	120,233

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII.

DR. COKE.

The Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D. was born at Brecon, in South Wales, on the 9th of September, 1747; and was baptized on the 5th of the following month. His father's name was Bartholomew Coke. This gentleman was an eminent surgeon in Brecon. He was of high respectability, and several times filled the office of chief magistrate of the town, with much credit to himself and family, and with an equal degree of satisfaction to the public. His mother's name was Ann Phillips. This lady was the daughter of Thomas Phillips, Esq., and after him his grandson was called Thomas.

At the age of sixteen, he was removed from Brecon to Oxford; and in the Lent term of his seventeenth year, was entered a Gentleman-Commoner at Jesus College, in that university. On finding revelation assailed by sophisms, which he had never heard before, and those principles attacked, which he had never been instructed to defend, silence succeeded to astonishment at first; but the poison was working its way through unguarded avenues to his heart: so that by slow and imperceptible degrees, he became a captive to those snares of infidelity, which he had at first surveyed with detestation and horror.

It must not however be supposed, because our young student found himself in the vortex of infidelity, that therefore all within the college walls were tainted with this mental pestilence. In both our universities many characters are always to be found, whose principles and conduct are an honor to their profession. And to these sources of learning we stand indebted for some of the most splendid ornaments of our nation, of Europe, and of the world, both in science and divinity. It providentially happened about this

time, that the discourses and dissertation of Bishop Sherlock fell into his hands.

The reasonings of Sherlock, only made him a Christian in theory. He was still a stranger to the religion of the heart, and knew nothing of the necessity of being born again. But an important point was gained; it had brought him within the precincts of Revelation, and even laid him under an obligation to examine with deep attention, the various doctrines of that system which he had thus embraced. The effect followed which might naturally be expected. From a treatise on Regeneration by Dr. Witherspoon, he obtained a considerable knowledge of the nature, and the necessity of it; but it was not until some time afterward that he was put in actual possession of that genuine faith which unites the contrite soul to the Lord Jesus.

At the age of twenty one, he was chosen common council man for the borough of Brecon, which station his father had held when living; and, at the age of twenty-five, he was elected chief magistrate, which important office he filled with more than common reputation.

Several years had now elapsed since the first intimations had been given that brought on the ambitious delirum with which he was still enslaved, being properly qualified, he took out his degree of Doctor of Civil Laws, on the 17th of June, 1775. During those intermediate years, in which Dr. Coke, as we shall henceforth call him, waited upon earthly promises, he made no great proficiency in seeking the accomplishment of those that are heavenly. Dr. Coke, having now exhausted his patience, in waiting on those proficients in artificial friendship—"who squeeze my hand, and beg me to come to-morrow," began seriously to look around him for some respectable curacy, that would promise to be permanent. It was not long before one of this description offered itself, at South Petherton, in Somersetshire. This he readily embraced, as it offered him an ample field for the

exercise of his talents, of his zeal, and above all, of his earnest desire to be useful, which, from his earliest recollection. had always been predominant in his heart.

Dr. Coke, as his biographer truly observes, was infected with infidel principles while at the university, in which he was unhappily strengthened by his ungodly tutor.* From this perilous infection he was in a considerable degree delivered, by reading the works of Bishop Sherlock and some other divines; but he continued a mere theoretic believer till some time after his connection with Mr. Wesley.

He was as his biographer acknowledges, naturally ambitious and aspiring; and for some years had made great efforts to obtain preferment in the church: but finding himself disappointed, and at length shut up in the curacy of South Petherton in Somersetshire, he became very unhappy, and felt the want of that real good, which as yet was unknown to him. At this time he found some comfort by reading, in secret, the prayers composed for King William by Archbishop Tillotson. Those gracious drawings, I have reason to believe, from his own account, was all the experience which he had of divine things till after his union with the Methodists.

About this time, the doctor became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Brown, of Taunton, an old Friend of Mr. Wesley. From this gentleman he received some of the writings, both of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher, which opened to his view scenes of usefulness, accompanied with labor and suffering, to which, till then, he had been a stranger. All that was of God, in his naturally aspiring mind, eagerly seized these openings of a new life; and "the ambitious stirrings"

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* It was chiefly in his cups that this gentleman administered the poison —"Eh! Coke," he would then say, as well as he could, "do you believe the Adam and Eve story, eh?" And thus get rid of the Bible with a fool-born jest.

which Mr. Southey has imputed to Mr. Wesley, (not only without, but contrary to all evidence,) were realized in the active mind of Dr. Coke.

Hearing soon after that Mr. Wesley was on his way to Cornwall, and would be at Mr. Brown's on a particular day, the doctor resolved to visit that gentleman, and thus obtain an introduction to the great founder of Methodism, whom he now admired above all men.

He found Mr. Wesley, as usual, mild and easy of access, with an appearance of happiness that exceedingly impressed him. The doctor staid all night; in the morning, Mr. Wesley having walked in the garden, he joined him there, and made known his situation, and enlarged desires. Mr. Wesley, with marked sobriety, gave him an account of the way in which he and his brother proceeded at Oxford, and advised the doctor to go on in the same path, doing all the good he could, visiting from house to house, omitting no part of his clerical duty; and couselled him to avoid every reasonable ground of offence. The doctor was exceedingly surprised, and indeed mortified. "I thought," said he, when he related the account to me, "he would have said, *Come with me and I will give you employment according to all that is in your heart.*" But to be thus put off, and confined still to the work of a parish, while such extensive labors and usefulness passed in vision before him, was a disappointment he could hardly bear.

He however began, and his warm and active mind gathering strength in its progress, he proceeded to turn the parish into a kind of Methodist circuit. He visited and preached in every part of it; and as some showed signs of dissatisfaction, and spoke against his proceedings, he cast off all restraint; and after the second lesson, on the Sunday morning, he commenced the practice of reading an account of his intended labors for the week to come, to the amazement of his auditory.

These bold advances soon brought matters to a crisis. The doctor was dismissed from his curacy; and as his opponents found out the day on which he was to leave the town, the bells were rung, and some hogsheads of cider were brought into the street, that those who were so disposed might rejoice over the deliverance of the parish from its Methodist curate.

"Meanwhile, the Doctor's opponents had no great comfort of their triumph. The worth of certain characters is not appreciated till we feel their loss. In walking the street, they every where met a mournful countenance. The poor had lost their benefactor, the people their pastor, the sick their comforter, and the wicked the only person that kept them in awe. But on the Doctor's future visit, sober reason having regained the sovreignty, these same opponents were the foremost to chastise their own folly. 'Well,' said they, 'we *chimed* him out, and now we will atone for our error, by *ringing* him in.' Such are the issues of bearing adversity with a becoming temper of mind."*

On Mr. Wesley's next visit to that part of the kingdom, Dr. Coke joined him, and accompanied him to Bristol. In this city, among a people established in the true faith of the gospel, the doctor's gentlemanly manners, his manifest zeal for religion, and his attachment to Mr. Wesley, gained him universal love and esteem. His biographer, however, has manifested very little knowledge of Mr. Wesley s character, in supposing that he kept the doctor under his own eye for some considerable time, fearing that he might be tempted to turn back, and that he should thus loose a helper that promised to be so useful. In all these things, Mr. Wesley always kept his mind perfectly free, knowing his high responsibility. Speaking of his own constant fellow labor-

* History of Wesleyan Methodists, p. 410.

ers, to whom under God he was indebted for his great success, he observed many years before this time, "The desire of serving me, as sons in the gospel, was on their part, not mine; my wish was to live and die in retirement." He was still more cautious with respect to the clergymen who joined him. He well knew that only those whom *the Lord of the harvest thrusts forth* into the work would be permanently useful in it; and he certainly was in no bondage respecting Dr. Coke. Upon Mr. Wesley's going to London, he left the doctor at Bristol, where he remained a considerable time.

While Dr. Coke continued in that city he became more fully acquainted with the rules of the society into which he had entered. The discipline which has been detailed in these memoirs, it now became his duty to maintain, and consequently to be present at all the meetings of the society. In these meetings he listened to Christian experience, to which he was himself a stranger; and not unfrequently, without being conscious of the cause, he found himself in that embarrassing situation described by President Edwards, of New England, in his "Considerations on the work of God," in that province: "How melancholy," observes that great man, "is the case of one who is to act as a shepherd and guide to a people, many of whom are under great awakenings, and many are filled with divine light, love, and joy; to undertake to instruct and lead them all, under those various circumstances; to be put to it to play the hypocrite, and force the airs of a saint in preaching, and, from time to time in private conversation; and, in particular dealing with souls, to undertake to judge of their circumstancas; to talk to those who come to him as if he knew what they said; to try to talk with persons of experience, as if he had experience as well as they; to force a joyful countenance and manner of speech, when there is nothing in the heart. What sorrowful work is here! O how miserable must such

a person feel! What wretched slavery is this! Besides the infinite provocation of the most high God, and displeasure of his Lord and Master!"

The case of Dr. Coke, who truly wished to do good, was however, not so lamentable. He was not in the condition of an ungodly minister, who, for a living, undertakes such a work. The doctor had no stipend, his own fortune being sufficient for his support; and, not being convinced of sin, he felt no such misery. He did not, indeed, like Mr. Southey and others, suppose that those people labored under a mental disease; on the contrary, he supposed them sincere and of a sound mind; but he comforted himself with his own supposed advantages. "They have," he said, to himself, "a knowledge of God among them, which is strange to me: but in philanthrophy, and in large views for the good of mankind, I am superior to them."

Dr. Coke had not those advantages in early youth with which Mr. Wesley was so eminently favored. He had not been brought up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;' his parents being only attached to the forms, but having no knowledge of the power of religion. He was also an only child, and greatly indulged. I have not therefore, to trace in him that early work of grace which was so conspicuous in the great subject of these memoirs: rather, I have to represent him as 'a brand plucked from the burning,' from the fire of ambition, and the intoxicating love of the world, so natural to man. He seems to have been altogether ignorant of the higher principle of the gospel, when his longsuffering God directed his steps to a people who were 'prepared of the Lord' to direct *him* to 'that fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," and to a principle of action wholly unknown to the natural man, whatever his talents may be,—'faith that worketh by love.' In this respect he had an advantage which Mr. Wesley had not: he was received, not into the wide field, where he might pos-

sibly *find the pearl of great price*, but into the *garden*, planted by the Lord, where 'gold, silver, and precious stones,' all the holy fruits of faith, were common to those who believed.

Being called to London, an event which happened on the road was a mean in the hand of Him, who 'numbered the hairs of his head,'—'who worketh all in all,' and who compassionated his ignorance, of teaching him how little real cause he had of self-preference. One of the passengers in the coach in which he traveled was taken with a fit; and, as there was an immediate cry for water, the doctor ran to a brook which he saw at some distance. Having no vessel, he thought of his hat; but on holding the fine new beaver, decorated with an elegant rose, then common among clergymen, his heart, which he had supposed so large, instantly failed him, and he turned in haste to the scene of distress. A gentleman who was assisting the afflicted man, and had observed with pleasure the doctor's design, exclaimed with surprise and indignation, "What, sir! have you brought no water?" and instantly ran himself to the brook, and returned with his hat full.

The doctor felt his situation in the presence of the passengers; but his inward mortification was inexpressible. He was deeply wounded in the very part where he supposed himself invulnerable. *He had trusted himself that he was righteous*, on a high scale, and had *despised*—or lightly esteemed—*others*. That scale now kicked the beam, and the convicted sinner felt the truth of that word, 'He that trusteth his own heart is a fool,"—'he knoweth nothing as he ought to know.' With his spirit thus wounded he arrived in London.

The doctor was now prepared to attend more seriously to what he heard among a people who were well acquainted with those teachings and reproofs of the Spirit of God, and with that renunciation of 'their own righteousness' which

must precede the obtaining of 'that righteousness, which is of God by faith.'

His trouble increased. He found himself to be what our Lord calls a *stranger* in the fellowship of his people. The Holy Spirit, who, by fastening one wrong act on the mind of a sinner, can, in the issue, as in the case of the Samaritan woman, convince him of 'all that he ever did,' now showed him that 'in him dwelt no good thing.' But to acknowledge his state, and to take his place among those who "groaned their nature's weight to feel," was a sacrifice as yet too great for him. He was stript of that self-complacency which had served at Bristol as a shield against all the arrows of conviction, and his distress became very great. He felt he had undertaken a work for which he was wholly unfit, and he saw no way of deliverance.

His arrival made some noise, and he had many visiters. Among the number was Mr. Maxfield, who had separated from Mr. Wesley, as already related, and who occupied a chapel in the neighborhood of Moorfields.* The ardency and strength of this gentleman's mind has been already noted. What Lady Huntingdon had said of him, when first employed in the work, must be fresh in the reader's recollection. After a short preface, he inquired with his usual promptness, into the doctor's own state: he seemed not to doubt of his justification, (as neither did Mr. Wesley,) but inquired if he were *perfected in love?* The doctor acknowledged he had not attained that privilege. Mr. Maxfield immediately pressed it upon him with all his might; showing, in his usual strong way, that the blessing was to be received by faith, and consequently that it might and ought to be received now. The doctor was amazed and

* What the biographer of Dr. Coke says of Mr. Maxfield's living at South Petherton, and of his being acquainted with the doctor there, is, I believe, an entire mistake.

much embarrassed: he got off, however, from his vehement exhorter as well as he could, informing him that he would maturely consider what had been advanced, and make it a matter of prayer.

The doctor did so, and an intimacy took place between them; the consequence of which was, that through the instrumentality of that extraordinary man, the doctor found rest unto his soul. He obtained that faith which gave his laboring conscience peace; and which, in a mind naturally so ardent, raised him up as on the wings of eagles! He joined from that time in all the exercises of religion with a fervor that surprised many, and caused the people to whom he ministered to glorify God on his behalf.

He confined himself no longer to the duties of a clergyman, but took part in all the work of a regular preacher. Preaching abroad, and in all the chapels; exhorting all with a zeal almost equal to Maxfield himself;* 'instant in season and out of season,' no labors seemed too much for him,—no journeyings too fatiguing; so that Mr. Wesley used to say he was to him as a right hand.

That much of the "infection of nature" (which our church, in conformity with Holy Scripture, states as "remaining even in the regenerate,") still remained in him, must not, and indeeed cannot be denied. 'The wisdom from above' was not always manifest in his zeal; so that

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* In this account, the reader will see much of what has been already related respecting Mr. Maxfield. Mr. Wesley told me that while this very zealous man remained in connexion with him, he took care to have Dr. Jones in London at the same time with Mr. Maxfield. The one was remarkable for enforcing the fruits of faith, and the duties of the gospel; the other for vehemently insisting on faith itself. Each had his peculiar talent; but laboring together, the people were kept in the safe path of faith and obedience. But Dr. Coke did not need any stimulus to duty. He was 'zealous of good works' from the first to the last.

those who *sought occasion* were amply supplied with matter for declamation against him. He spared not those whom he thought lukewarm, and consequently they did not spare him. Complaints were sometimes made to Mr. Wesley against what was called his rash spirit and proceedings; but as those complaints were generally made by those who were known to be *lukewarm*, or not well affected, that man of God, who would believe evil of no man, and put the best construction upon every thing, took little notice of these complaints, having generally abundant cause to be satisfied with all the doctor's conduct which came under his own observation, and especially with the humility and meekness with which he received every reproof or advice from his father in God.

As Dr. Coke, towards the latter period of his life, was chiefly engaged in the promotion of Missions, his name stood at the head of the missionary department, in the appointments of the preachers. And as superintendant of the Missions he regularly published, during the last seven years or more of his life, an annual report, in which he traced the rapid or progressive advancement of the work of God in various parts of the world. Among these it is pleasing to review the manner in which it has prospered in Ireland, and to trace the kind hand of Providence, in preserving his ministers and faithful people in the midst of surrounding discouragements and dangers.

He had lived to behold missions established in Ireland; in Wales; in the uncultivated parts of England; In America; in the West Indies; at Gibraltar; and at Sierra Leone. In all these places he had seen prosperity attend the word which he had thus been made instrumental in planting. These, therefore, no longer required that fostering care, which their infant state had rendered necessary; and, consequently, he found himself somewhat free from those calls of duty, which, on former occasions, were too imperious to be resisted.

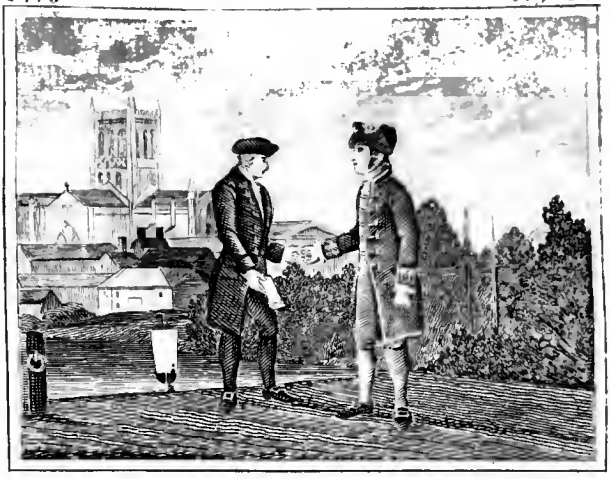
From his various publications he was also disengaged, by having transferred the whole to Conference. Of both wives he had likewise been deprived by the inscrutable dispensations of Heaven, so that he was again free to enter upon any new enterprise that might promise to enlarge the boundaries of Zion. These considerations, in their combined effect, awakened within him a latent desire which had long slumbered in his bosom, to turn his thoughts towards the shores of India.

In the early part of his life Dr. Coke had considered India as a region which afforded an ample field for missionary exertions; and in the year 1784, he had actually written a letter to a gentleman in India, to make inquiries into the state of morals, the influence of idolatry, the difficulties to be encountered, the probable amount of expense, the prospect of success, and the best plan of procedure, in case the establishment of a mission were attempted in Asia. To these inquiries, and to a variety of others closely connected with this general question, he received a very long, very full, and an accurately detailed account in a letter, dated February 19th, 1785. This letter may be found in the Arminian Magazine for the year 1792.

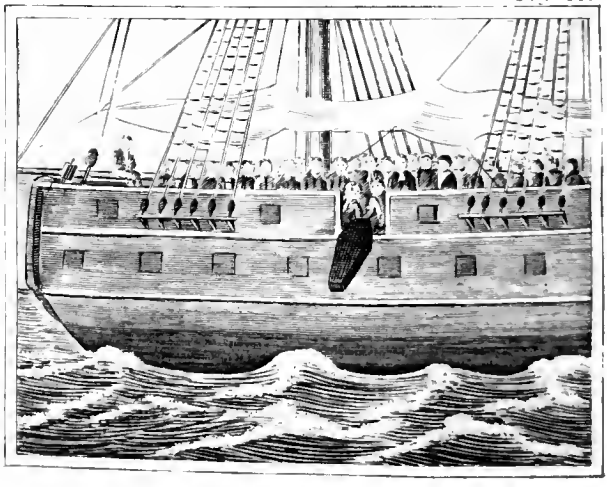
The difficulties which this letter faithfully recorded, were too formidable to be at that time encountered. And as those places, in which missions have since been established, presented a more promising field, the concerns of Asia were postponed until finance, ability and leisure should combine to mark the expediency of the arduous enterprise. Engaged in these missions, the intermediate years which passed away, left no surplus, either of time, of money, or of talent, to justify an undertaking of such magnitude. Nor was it until the year 1813, when those circumstances united together which have been enumerated, that Dr. Coke thought the period was fully come.

But although nothing was done towards the establishment of a mission in India till this time, it was a subject that had frequently engrossed his thoughts. On every occasion that presented itself he seized the opportunity to promote inquiries, thus continually augmenting his stock of information, which was treasured up against the anticipated but distant result. In the year 1806, Dr. Coke being at the house of a pious gentleman in Cornwall, who had resided upwards of twenty years in India, unfolded to him the designs which were then ripening in his mind. From this gentleman, (Col. William Sandys,) he procured a fund of information, with which he was so highly pleased, that he requested him to state what he had communicated to the Missionary Committee in London, to prepare them for that work which he fully expected he should one day undertake. A statement was accordingly given to the Committee by Col. Sandys, a copy of which is now before the author; and it is evident, from comparing its recommendations with the facts furnished by the mission when fitted out, that its principles were not without their influence in arrangements which were finally made.

In the year 1813, when his resolution to visit India was nearly formed, Dr. Coke opened a correspondence with the late Dr. Buchanan, whose valuable researches in India have made the Christian world his debtor. From this gentleman he also received much additional information, as well as a confirmation of what he had previously received from other quarters, particularly from Col. Sandys, Dr. Buchanan's intimate friend, correspondent and relative. It was through Dr. Buchanan that his views were more immediately directed towards the island of Ceylon, the obstacles there being fewer in number, and less in magnitude, than those which must have been encountered, in case he had thought of entering immediately among the Hindoos. This was recommended as a preparatory step, that might enable him and his



DR. COKE
soliciting money from a Naval officer for the Wlndu mission



DR. COKE'S
Burial at Sea 1814

associates to acquire more particular knowledge of the continent, to which the missionaries might repair hereafter, when they had fully established themselves in Ceylon, where part of the inhabitants, not wholly ignorant of Christianity, might be addressed in the languages of Europe.

Convinced by the representations of Dr. Buchanan, Dr. Coke now fully fixed his mind on a mission to Asia, and considered Ceylon as the grand point to which his views should be primarily directed. To a letter, in which the author of this work endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose of visiting India, on account of his age;—the shock which his constitution must sustain by a long residence in the torrid zone;—the difficulty of rendering the organs of articulation sufficiently flexible at his time of life to enable him to pronounce a new language;—and finally, his inability to leave behind him a successor that should be at once able and willing to beg from door to door,* to support the missions already established, he wrote the following reply:

"*Preaching-house, Dublin, June* 28, 1813.

"My very dear Friend,

"I beg pardon for being so long answering your letter. I have labored in the begging way, since the last Conference more arduously than ever, except about a month or six weeks, when I swam in waves of wo on account of my late precious wife.

"I am now dead to Europe, and alive for India. God himself has said to me, 'Go to Ceylon.' I am as much convinced of the will of God in this respect as that I breathe; so fully convinced, that methinks I had rather be set naked on the coast of Ceylon, without clothes, and without a friend than not go there. The Portuguese language is much spoken all around the cost of Ceylon, and indeed all along the coast of India. According to Dr. Buchanan there are 600,000 Christians (nominal Christians at least,) in Ceylon:

* See Plate 5, p. 225, also Appendix, letter F.

and there are now only two ministers to take care of them. I am learning the Portuguese language continually, and am perfectly certain I shall conquer it before I land in Ceylon. The fleets sail in October and January. If the Conference employ me to raise the money for the outset, I shall not be able to sail till January. I shall bear my own expenses of course. I'll request you to speak to the preachers, to see whether a preacher or two can be procured, who will consent to travel with me. I shall probably be here until this day fortnight, then I set off for Liverpool."

It is plain from the preceding extract, that Dr. Coke had not, in the month of June, procured any associates to engage with him in this important mission. It is also to be inferred, from the manner of his expressions, that it was his design to embark for Asia, if no one could be found to accompany him thither. We cannot, however, suppose, under such circumstances, that it was his intention to remain in India alone. He might have gone thither to make observations on the spot, that, on returning to England, he might be better able to judge of the number and qualifications of such missionaries as should afterward be induced to embark.

Prior to this time, he had taken into his serious consideration the state to which the missions, on his leaving England, would be reduced for want of pecuniary assistance This was a subject which frequently occupied his thoughts, from the first moment that he had recently turned his attention towards Asia. To provide for their support, even during his absence, and in case of his decease, whether at home or abroad, he had projected the plan of establishing missionary societies throughout the kingdom, and had calculated upon the practicability and utility of the measure sometime before any attempts were made to carry the plan into actual effect. It is not probable that he had anticipated the bene-

fits which have already resulted from the institution, in all their extent; but that he had contemplated the design with the most ardent pleasure, his own hand-writing, now in the author's possession, furnishes a decisive proof.

At the Conference of 1814, which was held at Liverpool, Dr. Coke introduced the design to visit India, stating at large the providential concurrence of circumstances which had appeared, the favorable disposition which some men in power had manifested towards the mission, and the reasons which had finally led him to visit the eastern regions of the globe. At the same time he introduced to the Conference six men whom he had procured to accompany him, and share in his toils. Of these volunteers in the cause of God, James Lynch, William Ault, George Erskine, William M. Harvard, and Thomas Squance were already travelling preachers, and to these were added two approved local preachers, whose names were Benjamin Clough and John M'Kenny.

The connexion at this Conference being deeply involved in debt, Dr. Coke was well aware that the old objection, which he had for many years been compelled to encounter, and occasionally to stifle with an act of generosity, would again be raised. And it seemed probable, from the embarrassments which existed, that his design to visit India would be wholly defeated, unless he could find some decisive method to impose silence upon the tongue of opposition, so far as pecuniary assistance and domestic claims were engaged in the issue. To meet this he boldly and generously offered to bear from his own private fortune, the whole expense of the outfit, to the amount of six thousand pounds, if that sum should be thought necessary.

The preachers assembled in Conference, who could not but approve of the measure, even while they doubted the ability of the Connexion to bear the expense of this additional mission, were awed into silence at this noble act of unexampled generosity. It was therefore finally determin-

ed, that a mission under the superintendency of Dr. Coke, should repair to Asia, that the seven missionaries proposed should be accepted, that £3,291 should be borrowed of Dr. Coke, to be reimbursed, and that such assistance should be immediately rendered to the noble undertaking as their circumstances would allow. It was furthermore resolved, that in the distribution of their labors, one of these should remain at the Cape of Good Hope, three should settle in Ceylon, one should repair to Java, and the other two should travel with Dr. Coke in such places and in such ways as his judgment, and existing circumstances, might direct. Such was the determination of Conference; but subsequent events rendered some alterations in these arrangements necessary.

Affairs having proceeded thus far, Dr. Coke, soon after Conference, repaired to London with his associate missionaries, to make arrangements, and serious preparations for their departure. His first care was to procure an able tutor, who could fully instruct them in the Portuguese language, so far as their time would allow, and furnish them with directions to complete their knowledge in its idiom and pronunciation during their voyage. With a large assortment of clothes, books, and other articles necessary for their comfort, during their intended residence in the regions they were about to visit, they were fully provided. In addition to this, Mr. Harvard and Mr. Squance being acquainted with the printing business, a printing press, with its various appendages, together with types and the necessary apparatus, was likewise purchased, and united to the general stock. For these various articles an ample allowance was made by Conference: but that nothing might be wanting to their accommodation in a foreign land, their stores were additionally augmented by the bounty of Dr. Coke.

Among the missionaries who were now prepared to embark, Mr. Ault and Mr. Harvard were married; and their wives had engaged to accompany them into the eastern hem-

isphere. Dr. Coke, who was at this time a widower, had felt the inconveniences of his solitary condition, even while residing in his native land. These he conceived would be greatly augmented, when, in a foreign country, he should be removed from the solaces which civilized life and European manners afforded. Possessed of property that was amply sufficient to support himself and a partner who might be willing to enter into his views, and travel with him in India, he once more turned his thoughts towards the marriage state. Piety, zeal, activity, an enterprising spirit, and a pleasing address, joined to a suitable age, were the primary qualifications which he sought. This assemblage of excellencies he found, or thought he had found, in a lady, who through a train of previous circumstances had presented herself to his notice. His proposals of marriage to her were accepted. But prior to their union, a knowledge of his intention reaching some of his friends, who thought the connexion he was about to form rather improper, they interfered, and, by their persevering remonstrances, ultimately frustrated his design.

Dr. Coke and his companions continued in London, attentively studying the Portuguese language, and making other arrangements for their departure, until the 10th of December, when they found it necessary to repair to Portsmouth, to be in readiness to embark, as they had taken their passage on board of two ships belonging to the fleet: the Lady Melville, commanded by Captain Lochner; and the Cabalva, commanded by Captain Birch. Dr. Coke, with Mr. Harvard, his wife, and Mr. Clough, were stationed in the latter, and all the others in the former. It certainly would have been desirable, if they could all have embarked in one ship, but neither the Lady Melville nor the Cabalva could receive them without incommoding other passengers: and to have taken another ship, in which all could be accommodated, would have cost them an additional sum of £900 for their passage.

They continued at Portsmouth until the 30th, when taking leave of their affectionate and hospitable friends on shore, and of each other, the parties separated to meet no more, till they greet each other in a world of spirits. Very early the next morning they weighed anchor and put to sea under the influence of a favorable breeze, and amidst the prayers of the pious, who witnessed their final departure from their native shores. "Our fleet," says Dr. Coke, "when we set sail, consisted of a line-of-battle ship of 74 guns, two frigates, a sloop of war, six regular Indiamen, two country Indiamen, (ships built in India) and about 25 smaller merchantmen." Several of these merchantmen were bound for several parts of the world, and only sailed in company to certain latitudes, to avail themselves of the protection which the convoy afforded.

The Cabalva contained about five hundred souls. Of these, two hundred were soldiers, about fifty were Lascars, and twenty six, including passengers, the captain, and his officers, occupied the cabin. Strictly attentive to every remarkable event that occurred, Dr. Coke kept a regular journal, which, from the time of their departure down to the 21st of February, 1814, has been transmitted to England. It is not unlikely that he continued this journal from February till the time of his death, but of this no account has been received.

On Saturday, January 1, 1814, they proceeded down the channel, but finding the winds variable, their progress was rather slow. During the following day, they hovered on the coast of Cornwall, and rather expected that they should put into Falmouth harbor, towards which the commodore directed their course. But on receiving from the shore those despatches which he wanted, their fleet was turned towards the ocean, and about eight at night they bade a long farewell to the Lizard light-house. On the 4th, they entered the Bay of Biscay, and were exposed to storms with but

little intermission until the 24th. During these gales several ships were separated from the fleet, some of which had sustained considerable damage; and one of the frigates was ordered to go in pursuit of them, and wait to conduct them on their voyage.

On the 9th of February, Mrs. Ault, who had been much indisposed before she embarked, and who was assured by a physician that a voyage into some part of the torrid zone was the only probable means of preserving her life, bade adieu to the present world, with a strong confidence in God, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and a calm resignation to his Divine will. On the following day her body was committed to the deep, in latitude 3 deg. 14 min. north, and longitude 22 deg. 10 min. west, there to wait till the sea shall yield up her dead. Previous to her death she was sensible of her approaching dissolution. But instead of expressing any desire to be carried to India to be interred, she requested that her mortal remains might be deposited in the ocean. This was accordingly done, accompanied with a solemn ceremony, which Dr. Coke, from on board the Cabalva, thus describes:

"*February* 10.—As we were all at breakfast, an officer of our ship came in, and informed us, that several ships had hoisted their flag half-mast high, as a signal of death. Our signal was immediately hoisted; while our whole company, who had previously known of Mrs. Ault's illness, concluded that the signals were raised on account of her death. This proved to be the case. The signals all continued half-mast high, till about half an hour before sunset, when the Lady Melville lifted up her death signal top-mast high, which was followed by all the fleet. This was the signal that the officiating minister (who was Mr. Squance) had begun to read the 15th chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians. And when the Lady Melville dropped her signal, the rest of the fleet followed her example, and thus ended the ceremony."

On the 5th of March, Mr Squance, being unwell, came, at Dr. Coke's particular desire, on board the Cabalva, where he continued until the 15th of April, when he returned in nearly the same state of health. About the 20th, they passed the Cape of Good Hope, but the fleet did not touch at this southern extremity of the continent. The Commodore only visited Table Bay, taking with him such letters as the passengers were disposed to forward to England from this port.

In passing the Cape they were exposed to violent storms, during which, and through the voyage, several sailors fell overboard, and were drowned; the severity of the weather preventing those on board from rendering them any assistance. On the 20th of April, during a brisk gale, a sailor on board the Lady Melville fell down the hatchway, and fractured his skull. Another fell overboard from the Neptune, and was drowned. And another from the main-top-mast of the Elphinstone fell into the sea, and met with a similar fate.

On the 23d they passed the island of Bourbon, and though about twelve leagues from the shore, they distinctly saw, with the naked eye, the flames issuing from a volcano. Sometimes the blaze appeared stationary for a short season: and then, as the mountain was high, it resembled a comet shining in the distant heavens. At other times, the eye was arrested by a stream of fire, moving with inconceivable velocity in sportive corruscations, and occasionally changing in its varying hues, from gleams of brilliancy, to a dismal and lurid gloom. On the 24th, they passed the isle of France. And, on the 27th, they were within five miles of the little isle of Gallega, yet no soundings could be found with a line of fifty fathoms.

But they were now brought to the margin of an event, which was of too much magnitude, and was too deeply interesting to all the missionaries, to allow them time to make

observations on any thing besides. This event was nothing less than the sudden and unexpected death of Dr. Coke. Cheerful, and animated with the mission which now was full in prospect before him, he had enjoyed a good share of health during all the former part of their voyage. And instead of having any presentiment of his death, he was ready, on most occasions, to comfort those whose spirits sunk under the violence of continued storms. Even to the last day of his life his exertions in his study were unremitted, to prepare himself for those missionary labors, on which he had already entered, and of which he beheld the happy effects by a pleasing anticipation. But his work was done; and his days were brought to an end, like a tale that is told.

On the first of May, he just hinted that he found himself somewhat indisposed, but his complaint was of so trifling a nature, that neither himself nor his companions viewed it in any serious light. On the 2d of May he continued much the same; his indisposition was not wholly removed, but he did not perceive it to increase. He conversed as usual, and walked the deck at his accustomed hour. In the evening, as he was about to retire to rest, he requested Mr. Clough to give him from their chest a little opening medicine. With this request Mr. Clough instantly complied, offering at the same time to sit up with him during the night. But this offer was refused by Dr. Coke, who did not think himself so much indisposed as to render such attention necessary. He, therefore, on retiring to rest, took his fellow missionaries by the hand, and, in his usual manner, commended them to God. This was the last time his voice was ever heard.

To improve his moments to the utmost, it had been his constant practice while on board, to rise every morning at half-past five; and to prevent him from sleeping beyond his accustomed time, the servant, who attended him, had received orders to call him from his bed at the appointed hour. On the morning of the 3d of May, the servant knocked, as

usual at his cabin door. But after several efforts, being unable to procure any reply, he ventured to open the door. This being done, he discovered, to his utter astonishment, the mortal remains of Dr. Coke, lifeless, cold, and nearly stiff, stretched upon the cabin floor.

The servant, on making this discovery, hastened to the apartment of Captain Birch, making him first acquainted with the melancholy tidings. Captain Birch, on hearing of the event, immediately sent for Mr. Clough, and communicated to him the awful information. Mr. Clough instantly hastened to Mr. Harvard, and imparted to him the tale of wo. Both then proceeded to the cabin of Dr. Coke, and saw that the catastrophe, which they would gladly have disbelieved, was mournfully true.

The corpse had by this time been taken from the floor, and laid on the bed; but from the placidity which rested on the countenance, it did not seem to have been agitated by any convulsive throes. The head appeared to be a little turned towards one shoulder; but with this exception, no distortion whatever was visible. As soon as the agitation, which the sudden shock had occasioned, had a little subsided, they requested the surgeon of the ship to examine the body. With this request he readily complied, and the result of his examination was, the probability that his death was occasioned by a fit of apoplexy, to which, from the make of his body and the nature of his constitution, he appeared to have been somewhat predisposed. But of this fact no satisfactory evidence can be either expected or obtained, as he died suddenly and alone.

It was supposed by those on board, that he must have risen from his bed, either to procure something that was not within his reach, or to call assistance, as he found his indisposition to increase; but that the stroke coming suddenly on him, with irresistible violence, he fell immediately on the floor, and instantly expired in that position in which he was

found by the servant. It is furthermore presumed that his death must have happened about midnight. If it had been much earlier, his fall must have been heard by some in the adjoining cabins, who had not retired long to rest; and if it had been later, his body could not have been stiff and cold. Divided from his cabin only by a thin wainscot partition were the cabins of Captain Birch and Mr. Harvard; but as neither of these heard the least noise from his apartment, it is fairly to be presumed that he expired without a struggle or a groan.

As the Lady Melville was at no great distance, and the weather was serene, Captain Birch kindly offered to Messrs. Harvard and Clough a boat, to transmit the melancholy tidings to the missionaries on board that ship. A note was accordingly written by Mr. Harvard to the brethren on board, and another from Captain Birch to Captain Lochner, stating the awful fact, and requesting the missionaries to hasten to the Cabalva, and join in the mournful consultation. On receiving their note, the missionaries gazed on each other in speechless amazement, scarcely presuming to credit the intelligence which its lines had imparted, or to believe the evidence of their eyes. They were however, soon roused from this natural delirium, by the surgeon of the Lady Melville, who entered their cabin with the note of Captain Birch to Captain Lochner in his hand, announcing to them with unquestionable certainty, that Dr. Coke was actually dead.

Expiring hope being now deprived of every subterfuge, the mournful band repaired on board, to mingle their tears with those who were already weeping there. Their first meeting was rather speechless than silent; and the sensations of their bosoms at the sight of each other, no language can fully express. Their own situation was now rendered truly forlorn: but the tide of sorrow, on which they were borne by their present calamity, swallowed up every other

consideration, thus leaving to them no room for reflections on their private concerns.

When the first transports of their grief had somewhat subsided, they held a consultation together, to contrive in what manner they might preserve the body, and, in compliance with Dr. Coke's will, restore it to England, that it might be interred at Brecon, with his wives. But as nothing could be done without the concurrence of Captain Birch, they agreed to wait on him, and state the particular wish which their deceased father in the Lord had frequently expressed. Messrs. Ault and Clough undertook this task, and on being introduced, communicated their message. To every thing they urged he paid the most scrupulous attention, and expressed his earnest desires to comply with their wishes, so far as prudence and propriety would admit. But on the present occasion, he thought the difficulties against preserving the body to be so numerous and so formidable, that their request amounted to little less than a moral impossibility.

Being disappointed in their hopes, in the same proportion that they were convinced by his arguments, Messrs. Ault and Clough then withdrew, to communicate to their associates in sorrow the observations which Captain Birch had made. A consultation was immediately held; and after deliberately weighing all that had been, and might be urged, on both sides, they finally concluded that it would be prudent to submit to the Captain's opinion, and suffer the body of Dr. Coke to be committed to the deep.

On communicating this reluctant acquiescence to the Captain, he seemed highly pleased with their determination, and requested them to pursue any plan they might think proper in celebrating his funeral solemnities. But as this was a point on which they had not deliberated, it became necessary for them again to withdraw, to hold another consultation. Their ship was now within about two degrees of the equator, and the intenseness of the heat rendered it improper

for them to preserve the body, which would soon become putrid in a cabin, contiguous to which, several passengers must sleep. It was therefore resolved, that his obsequies should take place on the evening of the same day.

Before they had communicated this intention to the Captain, he sent them a polite note, requesting to know how they meant to proceed; and at the same time expressed his desire "to show every token of respect to the memory of so worthy and excellent a man." He was soon made acquainted with their determination; and approving of the measures they intended to persue, every thing was got ready with all prudent expedition, to the entire satisfaction of all the officers and passengers on board. The funeral rites were conducted in the following manner:

The carpenters employed, made a large, thick, deal coffin, leaving, as usual on such occasions, holes in the bottom, that the air being expressed by the entrance of the water, might not prevent the body from sinking. In this coffin the body was decently laid; and, to accelerate its descent, four cannon balls tied up in four bags, were introduced, two at the head, and two at the feet of the corpse. The cover being nailed down, the coffin was brought upon deck a little before five o'clock and laid on the leeward gangway, on the starboard side, where it remained for some time, covered over with signal flags. The awning being spread, the soldiers were drawn up in rank on deck, when the tolling of the ship's bell called together the passengers and crew, so that the deck was quite crowded with solemn and silent spectators, who seemed much affected with the scene of mortality they were then called to witness. Mr. Harvard then read the burial service, and the body was consigned to its watery grave in silent solemnity, to be seen no more till "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

The funeral service being concluded, Mr. Ault, before the people retired, delivered an address, on the affecting oc-

casion of their assembling together. In this address he adverted to the character, zeal, perseverance, respectability, activity and public usefulness of the deceased, and lamented the loss which the present mission had sustained, by being forever deprived of his talents and counsels. From the sudden and unexpected stroke which had launched into eternity one of their companions, who but yesterday had walked the deck from which he had now been plunged into the ocean, and was at this moment descending into caverns which no plummet had ever reached, he took occasion to remind them of the uncertainty of human life, and to enforce the necessity of being prepared for an unexpected summons. Having finished his address, Mr. Lynch read a funeral hymn, from the 53d page of Mr. Wesley's collection beginning with these words,—"Hark, a voice divides the sky,—Happy are the faithful dead." He then concluded with a solemn prayer that God would render this melancholy visitation a blessing to every soul. The whole service was awfully interesting and deeply impressive. Several were visibly affected; and all conducted themselves with the utmost propriety. But to render serious impressions lasting must be the work of God.

This solemn event took place on the 3d of May, 1814, in latitude 2 deg. 29 min. south, and in longitude 59 deg. 29 min. east from London.

The missionaries having thus discharged the last sad rites of grateful affection to the mortal remains of Dr. Coke, were now at liberty to reflect on the peculiarity of their own situation. They were at this time, nearly in the middle of the Indian ocean, without a single known friend on board, to render them that assistance which all would want, as soon as they landed on a foreign shore, to which they were wafted by auspicious breezes. This was a subject which afforded room for much painful apprehension. Whether any provision had been made for their future support, in case such a calamity as had now happened should take place, they

had no means of knowing, but by examining the papers which Dr. Coke had left; and to all of these they could not have access, until the ships reached the place of their destination. In addition to this, the passengers belonging to the Lady Melville were instantly to repair on board of that ship, without the most distant prospect of conversing again with those on board the Cabalva, until they should cast anchor in Bombay. Such was the state of suspense in which they took leave of each other, and in which they remained until the 21st of May, when they reached their destined port in safety.

On meeting together at Bombay, they were fully convinced from searching Dr. Coke's papers, that no provision had been made for their support in case of his decease. This appeared at first to be a melancholy discovery. But God, whose overruling providence frequently makes painful dispensations subservient to his gracious designs, caused their distress to become the basis of their support. Instead of giving way to universal sorrow, they drew up a plain statement of their case, and presented it to Captain Birch, from whose benevolent conduct they had already received every mark of attention which dignified friendship could bestow.

Being ready to espouse their cause, Captain Birch introduced them to Thomas Money, Esq. a gentleman in Bombay, who on hearing from him a statement of their case, generously offered to advance them money on the credit of the Methodist connexion. This was a favorable circumstance. They had also in their possession a letter of recommendation, which Dr. Coke had procured from some friend in England, addressed to this same gentleman. On reading this letter he declared himself their friend, and would have accompanied them to the governor, if his health would have permitted.

The task of introducing them to the governor, Sir Evan Nepean, was undertaken by Captain Birch, who stated their

case with the same degree of friendship which he had invariably manifested. To his Excellency the Governor they had several letters of recommendation from some gentlemen of the highest respectability in England. Pleased with these recommendations, and sympathizing with them in their distress, he ordered a house to be prepared for their accommodation in the fort. But on finding this to be already occupied, he generously offered them suitable accommodations about five miles in the country. Of this they gladly availed themselves, during their residence in Bombay. But on finding a ship about to sail for Ceylon, five were obliged to hold themselves in readiness for their departure.

The attention, however, which they received from his Excellency the Governor, from Captain Birch, and from Thomas Money, Esq. raised them to a degree of credit and respectability, far above what they could have expected among entire strangers; and perhaps even superior to what they would have experienced if Dr. Coke had lived to conduct them without the aid of these providential friends. From Captain Birch they received £400, which Dr. Coke had lodged in his hands before they left England. This sum they deposited with Mr. Money in Bombay, taking with them letters of credit on his agents in Ceylon, and with these the favor of several gentlemen, who appeared to compassionate their case, and to interest themselves in their welfare, and in the prosperity of the mission.

Of their arrival at Ceylon, and their subsequent proceedings, detailed accounts have been given in the numerous letters they have sent to England. Many of these letters have been published in the Methodist Magazines, and they are probably in the hands of most persons who will read this volume. The prospect of their success became pleasing, as soon as they had entered on their labors; and from the most recent accounts that have been received, the favor-

able aspect of things had not been in the least diminished. Among the heathen, several had espoused the cause of Christianity, in defiance of the dangers to which their lives were exposed, in departing from the idolatry of their ancestors. A learned priest, of high respectability and great authority, had openly acknowledged himself their friend, and became an assistant in their labors. On the hearts of many a work of grace was discoverable; and the children, who had attended the schools they had established, promised fair to make a considerable proficiency in European learning. Several English gentlemen also, holding official situations in India, had invariably showed themselves friendly to the cause in which they were engaged, and had promised to protect them, so long as they rendered themselves deserving of protection; and beyond this, favor would be a vice.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

From the formation of the first Methodist Society in America, 1766, to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States, 1784; a period of eighteen years.

EVENTS of the greatest importance often take their rise from the most trivial circumstances. Actions of persons who have been, through the hand of providence, the means of first propagating the truths of salvation over an extensive portion of the globe, though they may seem in other respects altogether insignificant, yet have in them an interest, which induces posterity to cherish in their bosoms a desire of holding them in grateful and everlasting remembrance. Hence the lives, the sentiments, and even the personal qualities of those apostles, who disseminated the doctrines of our Divine Master through the world, are displayed in the brightest characters to the present day, whilst many of the proud heroes of antiquity are left obscured in deserved oblivion.

In America, Methodism, which has so rapidly spread abroad, arose from causes apparently accidental and unimportant. The Rev. JOHN WESLEY, the founder of Methodism, had long before its commencement been in this country, and formed a society in Savannah. This was in the years 1736 and 1737, when he re-embarked for Europe: and the society, not being sufficiently organized, was dissolved.

Nearly thirty years elapsed after this occurrence took place, and Methodism was still unknown among the inhabitants of America.

Meanwhile numbers in Great Britain and Ireland had embraced its tenets, and conformed their lives to the principles of true piety and holiness which it peculiarly enforces. The current of emigration from those countries into this, of course bore along with it some members of the original society. They were here scattered in parts widely remote from each other, where the total absence of a proper understanding between them, caused them, thus unsupported by mutual example, to neglect their former rules of piety; or impelled them to unite with persuasions of a different character, and of less correct principles.

A few thus isolated from the main body, were residing in the city of New York; and among them an elderly lady that had lately been a member in Ireland. Having learnt the arrival of a few more of her society, whom she had known in that country, she called at their residence in the way of friendship, and was mortified as well as surprised, to discover them engaged in a game of cards. She reproached them by taking up the cards, and throwing them indignantly away; then proceeded instantly to the house of Philip Embury, who was her countryman and a zealous advocate of the tenets of Mr. Wesley. With eloquence becoming a cause so praiseworthy, she portrayed to him the fallen condition of their friends, exhorted him to use all his efforts to reclaim them from their careless and erroneous ways; and reminded him that God demanded this necessary exertion on his part, who would otherwise charge their sins in a measure to his neglect. Less argument would have prevailed upon this man; whom we must consider as the real founder of Methodism in America. He agreed to hold a meeting in an apartment of his house, which was situated in Augustus-street, [then called Barrack-street,] whilst the lady should collect as many persons together as were willing to attend. The task was arduous; not only the scoffs of the ignorant, the sarcasms of the

worldly minded, the contempt of the more wealthy class of people, and the stern opposition manifested by partisans of old established persuasions, would array themselves against the undertaking; but also the sceptered hand of power, then as rigorous in religion as it was in civil concerns, perhaps would fall upon them with a weight that might at once crush their infant association. These dangers, however, were disregarded by persons, who had only a few earthly comforts to risk, and a sure prize of immortal glory to gain.

At their first meeting only six were collected. They sang and prayed, whilst Mr. Embury instructed them in the doctrines of salvation. Influenced by the spirit of holiness, they enrolled their names into a class, and resolved to attend regularly at his house for further instruction. Gradually increasing in numbers, they continued in this manner, till heaven sent to their aid an assistance as unsuspected as useful.

Shortly after having formed themselves into a class, they had obtained a more commodious room in the neighborhood; where, however, most people would not be seen among a sect, whom the world denominated wild enthusiasts. Indeed they were at times enthusiastic; but enthusiastic in the best of causes; and yet Mr. Embury endeavored to restrain those unguarded expressions of their feelings that were so disgusting to unconcerned observers. Once having met together as usual, they were surprised whilst singing, by the entrance of a man, in full military uniform, whose appearance on such an occasion struck the whole company with consternation. All eyes were anxiously fixed upon him, to discover whether any sinister purpose was intended by this visit, from an officer of the Royal American troops; but when they saw him disposed to join in worship, when they saw him kneel together with themselves in solemn prayer, and perceived the marked serenity of his features, their fears were dispelled, and they recognized, in

der the disguise of war, a brother and a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. After the exercises were concluded, he introduced himself as Lieut. Webb, from Albany; and from that moment became the chief pillar of this rising congregation.

Lieutenant (commonly called Captain) Webb, was extensively acquainted with the world: his ideas were derived from observation and experience. Nor did he esteem principles of honor and patriotism to be incompatible with the design of religion: since his conduct on this pious occasion gave full evidence of his observance of the latter; as his military career, and the honorable wound which deprived him of an eye, in the memorable battle on the Plains of Abraham, gave a clear proof of his strict adherence to the former. In his discourse he was extremely lively and energetic; and when the subject engaged him, so zealous as well as authoritative, that the malicious accused him of suffering, from his wound, a slight degree of mental derangement. At this time he held the station of Barrack master at Albany, and was highly respected. His figure was portly, his countenance commanding; and he usually wore across his forehead a black ribbon with a blind affixed, to cover his wounded eye. By chance he heard of the methodists and the difficulties they were struggling under; the Lord inspired his heart, and his sentiment was—

" Come then my soul, now learn to wield
" The weight of thine immortal shield;
" Put on the armor from above,
" Of heavenly truth and heavenly love." BARBAULD.

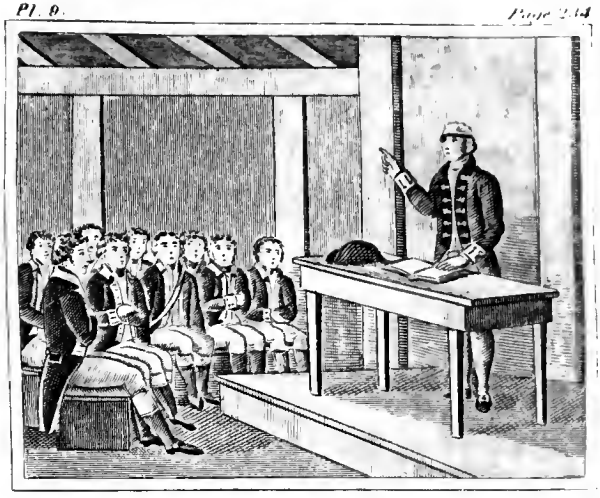
Similar sentiments beget similar exertions. Capt. Webb, a true soldier of the cross, soon united his endeavors with those of Mr. Embury as an assistant preacher of the gospel; and the novelty of his appearance, under a character so dissonant with his profession; was such that people began to attend in crowds greater than the room could hold.

It was usual at that time for military men to wear on all occasions their regimental suit; and to behold in the pulpit a preacher, attired in a searlet coat with splendid facings, having a sword with the Bible before him, was one of those anomalies, in which the world, while it ridicules the person, cannot help admiring the boldness of the act.* Capt. Webb, by exciting the passion of curiosity, obtained hearers; many of whom, convinced by the strength of his eloquence, under the influence of Divine grace, attached themselves to the society. Some of the first members, still living, remember well his animated manner, and speak in terms of high approbation of his blunt and emphatic style. "You must repent or be forever damned," often resounded into the ears of the wicked, as his arm, fitted for wielding the sword, fell with violence upon the desk, and struck terror into his auditory.

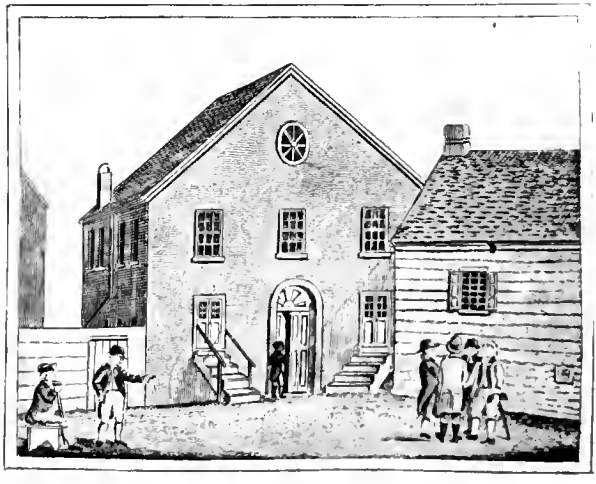
We will here take the liberty of introducing some account of this singular and excellent man, from the Portraiture of Methodism.

"In the campaign of 1758, in which General Wolfe conquered Quebec and lost his life, Captain Webb received a wound in his arm, and lost his right eye: religion had no place in his heart at this time. But in 1764, he was enlightened to see that he was a sinner; and so great a sinner, that he almost despaired of mercy. In 1765, the Lord brought him out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, and established his goings. Yea, he put a new song into his mouth, even of praise and thanksgiving to God. During this period, he had no director but the Lord. However, quickly afterward, he became acquainted with Mr. Roquet, an evangelical minister in the established church, and through him, with the methodists; when he

* See plate 9, p. 239.



CAPT. T. WEBB
preaching in the barracks in N.York



View of the FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
in John St. New York - the first erected in America 1768

soon resolved that 'This people shall be my people, and their God my God.'

"The first time he appeared as a public speaker, was in Bath. The preacher who was expected, not coming, he was desired to speak a little to the congregation. He dwelt chiefly upon his own experience, and the people were satisfied and refreshed. It was not long after this, that he was appointed Barrack-master of Albany, and went to America. When he arrived there, he regularly performed family prayer in his own house; some of his neighbors frequently attended. He often gave them a word of exhortation, and the encouragement he met with emboldened him to extend his labors."

In what is called William-street, (formerly Cart and Horse-street,) there was a house containing a large room, occupied as a rigging loft; which the society now took for the better accommodation of their increased numbers. Here Mr. Embury and Mr. Webb continued to preach, [the latter, it is said, also preaching occasionally on the heights of Brooklyn] till at length they thought proper to write to Mr. Wesley, requesting that he wonld send missionaries to their assistance.

About this period the idea of building themselves a house for public worship, was entertained. It was an idea of magnitude for them; since they had scarcely any resources, and their influence with the public in pecuniary affairs was very inconsiderable. Then the building of a church in honor of the Supreme Being, was every where considered to be a momentous undertaking; and not as it seems to be at present, a business of ordinary consideration. Their magnanimous project, however, was attempted, and Providence favored the cause of Methodism too much to allow of its failure.

The situation of the inhabitants of New York in religious matters, was somewhat peculiar. A professed infidel dared

not show himself; open atheism was only known as a monster of European production: and the Catholics whom fortune had cast upon these shores, were obliged to hide their superstitious rites, under a mask of thorough concealment. Nearly every body belonged to some sect; and indifference was viewed with utter dislike. Even the troops that paraded on a Sunday morning, in marching down Broadway, filed off to the right or left, some to one church and some to another. All were religious or pretended to be so; whilst the laws, taking an immediate interest in affairs of conscience, required the strictest attention to the established forms of public worship.

In what light then must the Methodists have been regarded, who boldly throwing aside the shackles of prejudice and hereditary customs, pursued a direct path to Heaven, and in a righteous cause defied the most despotic of all laws—that which attempts to bind men's consciences? They were ridiculed and hated; but despised they could not be: for mankind, where they fear the reproofs which an amiable character can cast upon their follies, are never capable of real disdain, how much soever they may feign it. Dreading the influence of their incontrovertible doctrines, it required all the art of parents to keep their unprejudiced children, from what they deemed a spiritual contagion: and an old member of the church relates to this day, the desire he entertained in his youth, of finding a truly religious people; tells the difficulties he met with, in escaping the threats of his family, of his resorting secretly up the winding stairs where Embury used to preach, and his listening there, with great delight, to all the truths of the Gospel.

Messrs. Lupton, Source, Newton, White, Jarvis, and a few more, were the persons most engaged in erecting the First Methodist Church in America. Of these, William Lupton, a very respectable merchant, proved himself the chief agent and support, whose maxim it is said, was,

"The church first and then my family." Through the interest of Capt. Webb, they procured a spot on Golden hill, which was a rising ground near the borders of the city, [now compact with houses and named John street,] where they purchased materials and contracted for the bulding in their own names and upon their individual securities. The dimensions were forty two feet wide by sixty feet long, and the exterior such as the engraving which this account is designed to accompany, faithfully represents. The fire of opposition raged tremendously against the rising edifice: its enemies loudly predicted its downfall; whilst pamphlets were published and discourses delivered, in order to frustrate its completion. But how fruitless this opposition was, time has fully shown. The multitude, a headstrong body ever delighted with strife, often adds an interest to that, which, without their canvassing the subject and taking different sides of the dispute, might soon fall into oblivion; and their very attempt towards smothering a good cause, is but giving it additional fuel.

On the 30th day of October, 1768, Mr. Embury delivered a discourse from the pulpit which he had himself constructed; declaring that the best dedication of the church a minister could make, was to preach in it a faithful sermon. In the preaching of Mr. Embury, there was something extremely affecting; he generally shed tears in the midst of his subject, and on all occasions showed himself a perfectly sincere Christian. His occupation was that of a house carpenter; but no business could detract his thoughts from heavenly things; and he was often heard singing hymns in earnest devotion, and at the same time busily plying the implements of his trade. With the example of his pious and unaffected manners—the convincing arguments, and irresistible style of Capt. Webb, all the barriers of the enemy were overthrown; the society became enlarged; their meetings respectably attended; and the much abused methodists began

to appear as a body, equal in power with any that had been introduced into the British Colonies.

Golden hill, locally so called, being afterwards lowered by digging away the earth, occasioned the church to stand more above ground, than had in the beginning been contemplated; it was necessary to descend into it at first by several steps. A house occupied as the parsonage stood partly before the front, and was a building in the antique taste of the Dutch: it also contained the methodist library, and was founded many years before the church.* Two additional lots, adjoining on the left side, were bought after the revolution for two hundred pounds, which are now to the trustees the source of a pretty handsome income. To screen the congregation from the passing multitudes in the street, a wooden partition or fence, having a gateway and a small door on one side was put up, and thus formed an area paved with brick, about thirty feet wide. The front of the edifice presented three upper windows, surmounted by a circular one near the roof; below, a large arched door with an entrance by steps on each side to the galleries; the women going in to the right, and the men, who sat apart entering on the left hand. But these were subsequent additions. The interior remain-

* The sextons lived in the cellar of this house, of whom one Cremor, a kind of police officer, was the first. Afterward, Robert Duncan was chosen; who was a poor laboring man, and so respected for his piety, that earnest seekers of salvation, when they wanted to be directed in the right way, used to exclaim to one another, "Come let us go and see Robert."—Since the above was written and laid aside for the press, Peter Williams, who had long been sexton, departed this life, in the full assurance of entering upon the joys of the eternal world. He was one of the oldest colored members. Though once a slave, he was enabled by his good conduct, not only to procure his freedom, but also to amass considerable property; and to educate his children for the highest stations to which his humble race can attain. In the engraving he is supposed to be closing the door.

ed for many years unfinished. The gallery had no breast-work nor any stairs to ascend to it; boys would mount by a ladder and sit there upon the platforms. The lower part for a long time had only benches, without even a back piece to recline against—so homely was the place where the Almighty deigned to show forth his power in many revivals, and reclaim many sinners from their wicked courses.

According to the colonial law, none but the established service could be performed in what was commonly called a church; and places for public worship belonging to dissenters, therefore were to have some appendage about them which should cause them to be classed among ordinary dwellings. Whence it became necessary to affix a fire-place and chimney to the methodist *church*, merely for the purpose of eluding so preposterous a regulation. The walls were constructed of ballast stone, and the face was covered with a light blue plaster. It was completed in the most substantial manner; designed evidently to withstand the brunt of successive ages. In vaults underneath the basement, bodies of the dead were deposited. WESLEY'S CHAPEL, as they called it, bore upon the whole, an appearance as plain and simple as the lives of its projectors. There were no useless decorations lavished on it, nor any frivolous ornaments; and so well was it suited to the humble minds of its proprietors, that many possessed of good taste, now regret its demolition, though they look with pleasure upon the costlier edifice that has taken its place.

Such minute particulars may give rise to censure from a casual reader; but as these are for the information of methodists, who should kindly remember the early attempts of their progenitors, the mention of the little things connected with the foundation of a vast religious body in the United States, will not, it is presumed, be considered by them as unworthy of an attentive perusal.

The expenses of public institutions, before the revolution, were often defrayed by the proceeds of lotteries; and the trustees of this, thought it not proper to adopt similar means for the diminution of their debt. How they succeeded is not ascertained; it is certain, however, that they wrote to the conference in England for pecuniary assistance; and Mr. Wesley sent them fifty pounds sterling, (about $240,) by the two preachers, Boardman and Pilmore, who had volunteered themselves for the service of their brethren in this country. A letter of considerable length, sent from New-York to the Rev. John Wesley, gives some additional account of the circumstances of the early society. It was printed in the form of a pamphlet, and from a manuscript copy of a single one since lost, the letter at the end of this account is subjoined.

From the dedication of the church to the arrival of the missionaries at Philadelphia, the first landing place, was precisely one year; during which time Capt. Webb had done much good, and his preaching was attended by large and attentive congregations.

"Under God," says the Rev. Mr. Crowther, "He was one of the first instruments of planting Methodism on the Continent of America; *and there he erected the first Methodist Chapel, which was in the city of New York.* In that city he preached with great success. He wrote to Mr. Wesley, entreating him to send preachers to America; who accordingly, in 1769, sent Mr. Richard Boardman, and Mr. Joseph Pilmore. After his return to England, Mr. Webb took up his residence at Bristol, and preached there, as well as in many places adjacent. In general, great multitudes flocked to hear him; many of whom did not hear in vain. He was instrumental in turning many from the ways of folly and sin, to the paths of wisdom and holiness. Mr. Wesley mentions in his Journal, coming to a place where Captain Webb had lately been. 'The Captain,' says he, 'is all life

and fire, and therefore many will hear him that will not hear a better preacher. And it is very well they do, for he does a great deal of good.'"

"His death, although remarkably sudden, was not unexpected by him. For some time he appeared to have had a presentiment of his approaching departure, and a few days before he was called hence, he expressed his wishes to a person concerning the place and manner of his interment. At the same time he said, 'I should prefer a triumphant death; but I may be taken away suddenly. However, I know I am happy in the Lord, and shall be with him, and that is sufficient.' He died at the age of seventy-two years."

Methodism was now firmly established in New York.—But another spark soon kindled in Frederick county, Maryland; and the light of salvation was also rapidly spreading in that State: through the influence of Mr. Robert Strawbridge, a methodist meeting-house was soon afterwards built, and a regular society forthwith organized.

Several preachers in England, besides the two deputed by Mr. Wesley, hearing of these proceedings in America, and hoping to be well received among the inhabitants, resolved to brave the dangers of the Atlantic, and to labor for the Lord in a wide uncultivated vineyard.

Of these, Mr. Williams, was the earliest who preached in the city of New York. Thousands attended the place of worship, and those who could not find entrance, were content to listen outside of the doors. Messrs. Boardman and Pilmore, whom the society received as missionaries, were the next who began to preach in the city, and afterward took their stated appointments of six months each, interchanging betwen this and Philadelphia. The appointments were then reduced to four months, and at last to three, on each station. More preachers arriving, circuits began to be formed in various parts of the United States. Their glory was to suffer the greatest fatigues, to toil night and day for

their Divine master, and to encounter all the perils of the most hideous forests, unknown deserts, and trackless uninhabitable regions. No pains were for them too great.*

The first Methodist society in America, was formed in the city of New York, in the year 1766, by a few emigrants from Ireland. About the same time, however, that Mr. Philip Embury and his associates were laying the foundation for such permanent good in this city, a similar society was formed in Frederick county, Maryland, through the instrumentality of Mr. Strawbridge, another local preacher from Ireland.

Those obscure emigrants, having been connected with the Methodists in their own country, and having tasted of the comforts of religion, not finding on their arrival here, spiritual associates with whom they could "take sweet counsel," were induced to assemble by themselves in a private room. Here, by the earnest entreaties of Mrs. Hick, a pious matron, Mr. Embury very reluctantly commenced preaching the doctrines of the gospel as taught by the Rev. John Wesley, and God blessed his labors. Some indeed have denominated Captain Webb the founder of Methodism in America. This I believe to be a mistake. Though he might have been in America before Mr. Embury and his associates arrived, we have no authentic account of his preaching, much less of his attempting to form a society, until after Mr. Embury began in New York. To ascertain the truth in respect to whom this honor belongs, the writer took much pains some years since, by conversing with several of the aged members of the society, all of whom have since been called to their reward in heaven, who distinctly remembered the first rise of the society, and took a grateful delight in rehearsing the circumstances attending its formation and progress.

* See plate 10,—also Appendix, letter H.

A MISSIONARY
travelling in the new Settlements

Apprentice let. H.

A METHODIST MISSIONARY
frozen to death in the Wilderness.

But though Capt. Webb, who was a converted soldier attached to the British army, which was at that time stationed in Albany, may not be considered the founder of Methodism in this country, he was one of its most zealous and successful promoters. Hearing of the society in New York, and of the difficulties with which they had to contend, he came to their assistance, introduced himself to Mr. Embury, and appeared before the assembly in his military costume, as a preacher of righteousness. To behold a military officer in the character of an ambassador of Jesus Christ, was a matter of no small surprise to the citizens who attended the meetings; but when they heard his addresses in the name of his divine Master, coming as they did, warm from a heart inflamed with the love of God, their curiosity was exchanged for a conviction of the truth, and a surrender of the heart to God.

In consequence of an increased attention to the word preached by Mr. Embury and Capt. Webb, the room in which they assembled became too small. They therefore hired a rigging-loft, in William-street, which they fitted up for a place of worship. Here they continued for a time to build "each other up in their most holy faith." While Mr. Embury remained in the city working with his hands for a living, and preaching to the people on the sabbath, attending prayer meetings, &c., Capt. Webb made excursions upon Long Island, where he preached Jesus Christ unto the people with peculiar energy and effect.

It was not long, however, before the rigging-loft in William-street was found too small to accommodate all who wished to assemble with them. To remedy this inconvenience, they began to think seriously about building a chapel. To this undertaking, however, there were many difficulties. The members of the society were mostly poor, few in number, and but little known among the wealthy and influential portion of the citizens. Being encouraged, however, by the exhortations of Mrs. Hick, a woman of deep piety, and

great intrepidity of mind, they made an effort to erect a house for the Lord. Meeting with more favor than they had anticipated, they finally succeeded in purchasing some lots in John-street, on which they built a house, 60 feet by 42, in the year 1768, calling it, in honor of the founder of Methodism, WESLEY CHAPEL. While this house was in progress, T. T. in behalf of the society, addressed the following letter to Mr. Wesley:

"New York, 11th April, 1768.

"REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,—I intended writing to you for several weeks past; but a few of us had a very material transaction in view. I therefore postponed writing, until I could give you a particular account thereof; this was the purchasing of ground for building a preaching-house upon, which, by the blessing of God we have now concluded. But before I proceed, I shall give you a short account of the state of religion in this city. By the best intelligence I can collect, there was little either of the form or power of it, until Mr. Whitfield came over, thirty years ago; and even after his first and second visits, there appeared but little fruit of his labors. But during his visit fourteen or fifteen years ago, there was a considerable shaking among the dry bones. Divers were savingly converted; and this work was much increased in his last journey, about fourteen years since, when his words were really like a hammer and like a fire. Most part of the adults were stirred up: great numbers pricked to the heart, and by a judgment of charity, several found peace and joy in believing. The consequence of this work was, churches were crowded and subscriptions raised for building new ones. Mr. Whitfield's example provoked most of the ministers to a much greater degree of earnestness. And by the multitudes of people, old and young, rich and poor, flocking to the churches, religion became an honorable profession. There was now no outward cross to be taken up therein. Nay, a

person who could not speak about the grace of God, and the new birth, was esteemed unfit for genteel company. But in a while, instead of pressing forward, and growing in grace, (as he exhorted them,) the generality were pleading for the remains of sin, and the necessity of being in darkness. They esteemed their opinions as the very essentials of Christianity, and regarded not holiness either of heart or life.

"The above appears to me to be a genuine account of the state of religion in New York eighteen months ago, when it pleased God to rouse up Mr. Embury to employ his talents (which for several years had been hid as it were in a napkin,) by calling sinners to repentance, and exhorting believers to let their light shine before men. He spoke at first only in his own house. A few were soon collected together and joined into a little society, chiefly his own countrymen, Irish Germans. In about three months after, brother White and brother Souse from Dublin, joined them. They then rented a empty room in their neighborhood, which was in the most infamous street in the city, adjoining the barracks. For some time few thought it worth their while to hear: but God so ordered it by his providence, that about fourteen months ago Captain Webb, barrack master at Albany, (who was converted three years since at Bristol,) found them out, and preached in his regimentals. The novelty of a man preaching in a scarlet coat, soon brought greater numbers to hear than the room could contain. But his doctrines were quite new to his hearers; for he told them, point blank, 'that all their knowledge and religion were not worth a rush, unless their sins were forgiven, and they had 'the witness of God's Spirit with theirs, that they were the children of God.'' This strange doctrine, with some peculiarities in his person, made him soon taken notice of; and obliged the little society to look out for a larger house to preach in. They soon found a place

that had been built for a rigging house, sixty feet in length and eighteen in breadth.

"About this period Mr. Webb, whose wife's relations lived at Jamaica, Long Island, took a house in that neighborhood, and began to preach in his own house, and several other places on Long Island. Within six months, about twenty four persons received justifying grace, nearly half of them white,—the rest negroes. While Mr. Webb, was, (to borrow his own phrase,) 'felling trees on Long Island,' brother Embury was exhorting all who attended on Thursday evenings, and Sundays, morning and evening, at the rigging house, to flee from the wrath to come. His hearers began to increase, and some gave heed to his report, about the time the gracious providence of God brought me safe to New York, after a very favorable passage of six weeks from Plymouth. It was the 26th day of October last, when I arrived, recommended to a person for lodging; I inquired of my host, (who was a very religious man,) if any Methodists were in New York; he answered, that there was one Captain Webb, a strange sort of man, who lived on Long Island, and who sometimes preached at one Embury's, at the rigging house. In a few days I found out Embury. I soon found of what spirit he was, and that he was personally acquainted with you, and your doctrines, and that he had been a helper in Ireland. He had formed two classes, one of the men, and the other of the women, but had never met the society apart from the congregation, although there were six or seven men, and as many women, who had a clear sense of their acceptance in the beloved.

"You will not wonder at my being agreeably surprised in meeting with a few here, who have been and desire again to be in connexion with you. God only knows the weight of affliction I felt on leaving my native country. But I have reason now to conclude God intended all for my good. Ever since I left London, my load has been removed, and

I have found a cheerfulness in being banished from all near and dear to me, and I made a new covenant with my God, that I would go to the utmost parts of the earth, provided he would raise up a people, with whom I might join in his praise. On the great deep, I found a more earnest desire to be united with the people of God than ever before. I made a resolution that God's people should be my people, and their God my God: and bless his holy name, I have since experienced more heartfelt happiness than ever I thought it possible to have on this side eternity. All anxious care about my dear wife and children is taken away. I cannot assist them, but I daily and hourly commend them to God in prayer, and I know he hears my prayers, by an answer of love in my heart. I find power daily to devote myself unto him; and I find power also to overcome sin. If any uneasiness at all affects me, it is because I can speak so little of so good a God.

"Mr. Embury lately has been more zealous than formerly; the consequence of which is, that he is more lively in preaching; and his gifts as well as graces, are much increased. Great numbers of serious persons came to hear God's word as for their lives; and their numbers increased so fast that our house, for six weeks past, would not contain half the people.

"We had some consultations how to remedy this inconvenience, and Mr. Embury proposed renting a small lot of ground for twenty-one years, and to exert our utmost endeavors to build a wooden tabernacle; a piece of ground was proposed; the ground rent was agreed for, and the lease was to be executed in a few days. We however, in the mean time, had two several days for fasting and prayer, for the direction of God and his blessing on our proceedings; and providence opened such a door as we had no expectation of. A young man, a sincere Christian, and constant hearer, though not joined in society, not giving any

thing towards this house, offered ten pounds to buy a lot of ground, went of his own accord to a lady who had two lots to sell, on one of which there is a house that rents for eighteen pounds per annum. He found the purchase money of the two lots was six hundred pounds, which she was willing should remain in the purchaser's possession, on good security. We called once more on God for his direction, and resolved to purchase the whole. There are eight of us who are joint purchasers: among whom Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton are men of property. I was determined the house should be on the same footing as the orphan house at New-Castle, and others in England: but as we were ignorant how to draw the deeds, we purchased for us and our heirs, until a copy of the writing is sent us from England, which we desire may be sent by the first opportunity.

"Before we began to talk of building, the devil and his children were very peaceable: but since this affair took place, many ministers have cursed us in the name of the Lord, and labored with all their might to stop their congregations from assisting us. But he that sitteth in the highest laughed them to scorn. Many have broken through and given their friendly assistance. We have collected above one hundred pounds more than our own contributions; and have reason to hope in the whole, we shall have two hundred pounds: but the house will cost us four hundred pounds more, so that unless God is pleased to raise up friends, we shall yet be at a loss. I believe Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton, will borrow or advance two hundred pounds, rather than the building should not go forward; but the interest of money here, is a great burden—being seven per cent. Some of our brethren proposed writing to you for a collection in Englahd: but I was averse to this, as I well know our friends there are over burdened already. Yet so far I would earnestly beg: if you would intimate our circumstances to particular persons of ability, perhaps God

would open their hearts to assist this infant society, and contribute to the first preaching house, on the original Methodist plan in all America, (excepting Mr. Whitfield's orphan house in Georgia,) but I shall write no more on this subject.

"There is another point far more material, and in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in the name of the whole society. We want an able and experienced preacher; one who has both gifts and grace necessary for the work. God has not, indeed, despised the day of small things. There is a real work of grace begun in many hearts, by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury; but though they are both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications for such an undertaking; and the progress of the gospel here depends much upon the qualifications of preachers.

"In regard to a preacher, if possible we must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian: one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but by the goodness of God, such a flame would be soon kindled, as would never stop until it reached the great South sea. We may make many shifts to avoid temporal inconveniences; but we cannot purchase such a preacher as I have described. Dear sir, I entreat you for the good of thousands, to use your utmost endeavors to send one over. I would advise him to take shipping at Boston, Liverpool, or Dublin, in the month of July or early in August; by embarking at this season he will have fine weather in his passage, and probably arrive here in the month of September. He will see before winter what progress the gospel has made.

"With respect to money for the payment of the preacher's passage over, if they could not procure it, we would sell our coats and shirts to procure it for them.

"I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you and many of your brethren, will not forget the church in this wilderness.

"I remain with sincere esteem, rev. and dear sir,

"Your very affectionate brother and servant,

"T. T."

In answer to the earnest request contained in this letter, Mr. Wesley sent over Messrs. Boardman and Pilmore, and £50 sterling, as a "token of brotherly love." They were cordially received by the people here, and soon much encouraged in their work, as the following letter from Mr. Pilmore will fully show:

"Philadelphia, Oct. 31, 1769.

"Rev. Sir,—By the blessing of God we are safely arrived here, after a tedious passage of nine weeks. We were not a little surprised to find Capt. Webb in town, and a society of about one hundred members, who desire to be in close connexion with you. 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

"I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday evening I went out upon the common. I had the stage appointed for the horse race for my pulpit, and I think between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field preaching. When I began to talk of preaching at five o'clock in the morning, the people thought it would not answer in America: however, I resolved to try, and I had a very good congregation.

"Here seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country, and I hope many souls will be gathered in. The people in general like to hear the word, and seem to have ideas of salvation by grace."

After continuing a short time in Philadelphia, Mr. Pilmore made an excursion to Maryland, where he found Mr.

Strawbridge, and preached with some success. He likewise visited some parts of Virginia and North Carolina; and witnessing the happy effects of his labors in the awakening of sinners, he formed some societies. In all places which he visited, he found people eager to hear the word, and kind to those who came to preach it. From hence he returned to Philadelphia, and soon came down to New York, while Mr. Boardman went to Philadelphia; thus commencing, in the early stage of their labors, a regular change from place to place. The society in New York, under the labors of Mr. Embury and Captain Webb, was in a flourishing state on the arrival of Mr. Boardman, whose godly simplicity and evangelical preaching were made a peculiar blessing to many. In this prosperous state of society, Mr. Pilmore entered upon his charge over them. As he thought it prudent to make a fair trial before he transmitted his account of the state of things to Mr. Wesley, he deferred writing until April 24, 1770, on which day he wrote the following letter:—

"Our house contains about seventeen hundred hearers. About a third part of those who attend get in; the rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word, as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some of the back settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them! O! may the Most High now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance. The number of the blacks that attend the preaching affects me much."

From these representations of the state and disposition of the people in America, Mr. Wesley was induced to concert measures to send them over more laborers. Accordingly the next year, 1771, Mr. Francis Asbury and Mr. Richard Wright, who volunteered their services, were dismissed under the blessing of God for the help of their brethren in America. They set sail from Bristol, Sept. 2,

1771, and landed in Philadelphia, the 24th of October following. They were received with great cordiality, "the people hardly knowing," says Mr. Asbury, "how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection, and receiving us as the angels of God."

According to a notice in Mr. Asbury's Journal, vol. iii, p. 109, it appears that when he arrived in this country, he found three hundred Methodists in New York, two hundred and fifty in Philadelphia, and a few in New Jersey, probably in all about six hundred. Those in Maryland do not appear to be included in this number. On the arrival of Mr. Asbury, he very properly judged that they could not expect a general spread of the work of God, unless they extended themselves into the country towns and villages. He accordingly led the way, by which the prospects of usefulness opened before them in every direction.*

By the faithful exertions of Mr. Asbury, and those who were associated with him, the work of God extended among the people, and it was soon perceived that more help was much needed to supply the calls of the people. Indeed the people in many places, particularly in the middle and southern provinces—for so these United States were then called, being a part of the British dominions—were but poorly supplied with the word and ordinances of Christ, and pure religion was generally at a very low ebb. A taste for experimental religion had, it is true, been created in some hearts, by the powerful preaching of the celebrated Whitefield, who, some time previously to the arrival of the Methodist missionaries, had traveled through the country, and preached with his usual zeal and success. The fields, however, at this time, "were ripe for the harvest;" and a faithful account of the state of affairs here being transmitted to Mr. Wesley, in 1773, Messrs. Thomas Rankin and

* See him in the Plate.

Pl. II. Page 252

FRANCIS ASBURY,
commencing the Itinerant ministry

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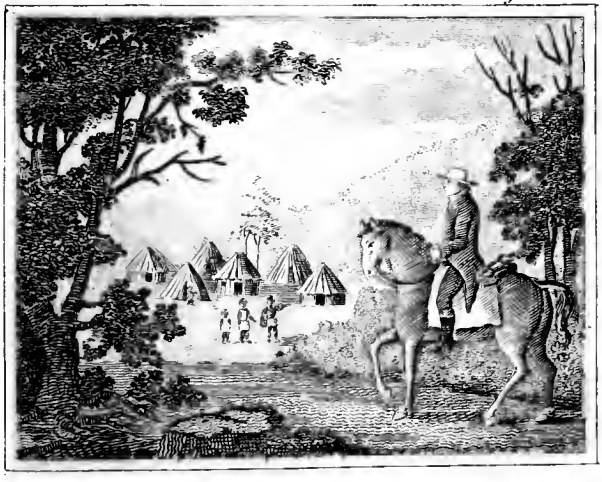

BISHOP Mc KENDREE
visiting an Indian Village

George Shadford volunteered their services and came over to the continent: and the following year Messrs. James Dempster and Martin Rodda were added to the number.

To Mr. Rankin Mr. Wesley committed the general superintendency of the work, and he called the first regular conference in the city of Philadelphia, in the month of June, 1773.*

Minutes of some conversations between the Preachers in connexion with the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.† Philadelphia, June, 1773.

The following queries were proposed to every preacher:

1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley and that conference, to extend to the preachers and people in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?

Ans. Yes.

2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labor in the connexion with Mr. Wesley, in America?

Ans. Yes.

3. If so, does it not follow, that if any preachers deviate from the minutes, we can have no fellowship with them till they change their conduct?

Ans. Yes.

The following rules were agreed to by all the prcachers present:

1. Every preacher who acts in connexion with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America, is strictly to

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* This date corresponds with that in the printed minutes; but according to Mr. Ashbury's Journal, this conference was held July 14, 1773, and Mr. Drew, in his life of Dr. Coke, agrees with Mr. Asbury in an extract from Mr. Rankin.

† See plate 13, p. 284.

avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.

2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner, to press the people in Maryland and Virginia, to the observance of this minute.

3. No person or persons to be admitted into our love-feasts oftener than twice or thrice, unless they become members: and none to be admitted to the society meetings more than thrice.

4. None of the preachers in America to reprint any of Mr. Wesley's books, without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more, unless under the above restrictions.

6. Every preacher who acts as an assistant, to send an account of the work once in six months to the general assistant.

Quest 1. *How are the preachers stationed?*

Ans.

New York, Philadelphia,	Thomas Rankin, George Shadford, } to change in four months.
New Jersey,	John King, William Watters.
Baltimore,	Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry.
Norfolk,	Richard Wright.
Petersburgh,	Robert Williams.

Quest. 2. *What numbers are there in the society?*

Ans.

New York,	180	Maryland,	500
Philadelphia,	180	Virginia,	100
New Jersey,	200		
		(Preachers, 10.)	1160

During this year there was a considerable revival of religion on the Eastern shore of Maryland, especially in Kent county, where many souls were awakened and brought to the knowledge of God. There was a class formed also in New Rochelle this year, about twenty five miles north of New York. There was some revival also in Baltimore; and in November the society at Fell's Point engaged to build a meeting house, and agreed with a man to do the brick work of the house. The first meeting house that was built by the Methodists in Baltimore, was that at Fell's Point. At present, (1809,) we have five meeting houses in Baltimore: four for the white people, and one for the black people.

In the beginning of the year 1774, John King, an Englishman, came first to the south parts of Virginia, where his labors were made a blessing to many people. He was a sensible, zealous preacher, and was very useful while he continued to travel.

1774.—In February, this year, the methodists engaged to build a meeting house in Baltimore town, and on the eighteenth day of April the foundation of the house was laid in *Lovely lane*. The first quarterly meeting that was ever held in the town of Baltimore was on Tuesday the third of May in this year.

The first meeting house that was ever built by the Methodists on the Eastern shore of Maryland, was in Kent county, about nine miles below Chester town, in the spring 1774, and was called Kent meeting house. Many of the wicked neighbors were violently opposed to the building of that house; and after the workmen had prepared the frame in order to raise it the next day, some evil designing men came in the night, and broke the rafters to pieces, to prevent the house from being raised. But the workmen went on nevertheless, and the Lord prospered his work among the people, and there has been an established society in that place ever since.

1774.—The second conference was held this year in Philadelphia on the 25th day of May. There were six questions asked at that conference.

Q. 1. *Who are admitted this year?* i. e. into full connection. There are five.

Q. 2. *Who are admitted on trial this year?* There were seven.

Q. 3. *Who are assistants this year?* There were nine.

Q. 4. *Are there any objections to any of the preachers?*

A. They were examined one by one.

Q. 5. *How are the preachers stationed this year?*

Q. 6. *What numbers are there in society?*

A. 2073.

This year we had ten eireuits; last year we had but six.

The three following eireuits were formed sinee the last eonference, namely, *Chester*, *Kent*, and *Frederick*. Two other eireuits were changed; New Jersey was divived and called *Trenton* and *Greenwich;* and Petersburg in Virginia was changed and called *Brunswick*. We had seventeen travelling preaehers this year. Last year we had only ten.

This year there were added to the society 913 members.

At that conferenee the preachers agreed that every travelling preacher should be allowed £6 Pennsylvania curreney a quarter; and which was $61 a year, and his travelling expenses.

As Thomas Rankin was the general assistant, he was to be supported where he spent his time: he was appointed for Philadelphia, and Mr. Asbury in New York.

In the beginning of this year, on Sunday the 2d of January, after commending the Americans to God, Mr. Boardman and Mr. Pilmore embarked at New York for England. Mr. Boardman lived about eight years afterwards, and died in peace.

In the beginning of this year, 1774, Robert Williams began to form societies in Virginia, and made out a plan for a six weeks circuit, which extended from Petersburg, to the south over Roanoke River, some distance into North Carolina. From the conference, three preachers came to that circuit, John King, John Wade, and Isaac Rollings: these preachers were blessed among the people and were made a blessing to them in their turn; and in the latter part of the year, there was a most remarkable revival of religion in most parts of the circuit. Christians were much united, and much devoted to God; and sinners were greatly alarmed, and many of them truly changed both in heart and life. The preachers had not only large congregations to hear them in the day time, but also in the night when meetings were appointed. Indeed, the Lord wrought wonders among us during that year.

In 1775, the third conference was held on May 17, in Philadelphia. Two preachers were sent over from England, viz. James Dempster and Martin Rodda: Mr. Rodda had been travelling twelve years, and Mr. Dempster ten years. The conference took in three preachers besides the two from Europe.

In the course of this year there was a gracious work of God in several places; but in none to equal that which took place in Brunswick circuit, where George Shadford was travelling at that time. It was quite common for sinners to be seized with a trembling and shaking, and from that to fall down on the floor as if they were dead: and many of them have been convulsed from head to foot, while others have retained the use of their tongues, so as to pray for mercy, while they were lying helpless on the ground or floor.

The Christians too were sometimes so overcome with the presence and love of God, as not to be able to stand on their feet. It was truly affecting to see them collecting round the penitent sinners, and praying for them one after another,

and sometimes two or three together at the same time, until some of the mourners would get converted; and then to see the young converts leaping up with streaming eyes, and catching in their arms those that were nearest to them, and calling upon all present to praise God for what he had done for their souls. In that revival there were some things which might be called imprudent; yet there were so many souls brought to God, that it was thought to be dangerous to try to stop the irregularities, for fear of stopping that gracious work which the Lord was so strangely carrying on. There were above 600 members added to the society in that circuit in the course of that year.

Mr. Jarratt, the Church clergyman, was very useful in that revival of religion; and his heart was closely united to the Methodists. He would frequently preach, meet the classes, hold love-feasts, and administer the Lord's supper among them. He was an eye-witness of this work; and as it was the greatest revival of religion that had ever been known in that part of the country, I think it will be a satisfaction to many people, to give them some farther account of it.

1775.—In the latter end of this year, there was as great a revival of religion in the south parts of *Virginia*, as perhaps was ever known in country places in so short a time: but it became still more considerable in January, 1776. Mr. G. Shadford then preached in *Virginia;* and while the ears of the people were opened by novelty, God sent his word home upon their hearts. Many sinners were powerfully convinced, and cried for mercy. The news of convictions and conversions was common; and the people of God were inspired with new life and vigor, by the happiness of others. But in a little time they were made thoroughly sensible, that they themselves stood in need of a deeper work of grace in their hearts, than they had yet experienced; and entreated God with strong cries and tears, to save them from the re-

mains of inbred sin; and so to "circumcise their hearts," that they might "love him with all their hearts," and serve him with all their strength.

Many who had long neglected the means of grace, now flocked to hear, not only the preachers, but also the exhorters and leaders. And whether there was preaching or not, the Lord's power was still among the people. And it was found that prayer meetings were singularly useful in promoting the work of God.

This out-pouring of the spirit extended itself, more or less, through most of the circuits, which takes in a circumference of between four and five hundred miles; and the work went on with a pleasing progress till the beginning of May; when a quarterly meeting was held at Boisseau's, (commonly called Bushill's) chapel, about twelve miles from Petersburg. At that meeting the windows of heaven were opened indeed, and the rain of divine influence continued to pour down for more than forty days.

The multitude that attended on this occasion, returned home alive to God, and spread the flame through their respective neighborhoods, which ran from family to family, so that within four weeks, several hundred found the peace of God; and scarce any conversation was to be heard, but concerning the things of God. In many large companies one careless person could not be seen; and the far greater part seemed perfectly happy in a clear sense of the love of God.

This work in a very short time spread through *Dinwiddie*, *Amelia*, *Brunswick*, *Sussex*, *Prince George*, *Lunenburg* and *Mecklenburg* counties.

The work was so great on the last day of the quarterly meeting, that they continued in the meeting house till night, and then sent for candles, and continued till some time in the night before they broke up.

The work of God thus increased on every side, and more preachers were soon wanting. And the Lord raised up several young men, who were exceedingly useful as local preachers..

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the 30th and 31st days of July, a quarterly meeting was held at Mabury's dwelling-house in *Brunswick* (now Greensville) county. No meeting-house in *Virginia* could have held the people. We had a large arbor in the yard, which would shade from the sun two or three thousand people. The first day was a blessed season; but the second day was a day never to be forgotten. We held the love-feast under the arbor in the open air; the members of the society took their seats, and other people stood all around them by hundreds. The place was truly awful by reason of the presence of the Lord. Many of the members spake; and while some declared how the Lord had justified them freely, others declared how and when the blood of Jesus had cleansed them from all sin. So clear, so full, and so strong was their testimony, that while some were speaking their experience, hundreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God, for pardon or holiness.

1776.—On the 21st day of May, the fourth Conference was held in Baltimore. This was the first time that the preachers ever held a conference in that town. At that time there were four new circuits added, three of which were in *Virginia; Fairfax*, *Hanover* and *Pittsylvania*. The other was called *Carolina*, as it lay in the state of *North Carolina*. The two circuits which had been formed in the state of *New Jersey*, were now put together, and called *New Jersey* in the minutes. *Norfolk* was left out of the minutes altogether, on account of the war, which had so distressed the town, that we could not keep a preacher in that station.

There were twenty-five itinerant preachers appointed to the different circuits this year; the conference had admitted on trial eleven young preachers.

This conference appointed a day of fasting, to be on the 26th of July.

On the 4th day of July, 1776, the United States of America, were declared by Congress to be *Free and Independent States.*

The Methodists met with some particular persecutions this year. Mr. Asbury says on the 20th day of June, "I was fined near Baltimore five pounds for preaching the gospel." It was with great difficulty that our preachers could travel their circuits, on account of the war which was spreading through the land. What made the matter worse than it would otherwise have been, was, our head preachers were all from Europe, and some of them were imprudent in speaking too freely against the proceedings of the Americans.

1777.—The fifth conference was held at Deer-Creek meeting-house, in Harford county in Maryland, on the 20th day of May. There were two new circuits taken in at that time, namely *Sussex* and *Amelia*, in Virginia. Both of them were taken off from *Brunswick;* and some new places were taken into the plan. There were two more circuits taken on the minutes which had been left off the year before, viz. *Norfolk* and *Chester*. In all, there were fifteen circuits this year, and thirty five traveling preachers to travel in them. There was no preacher appointed to *New York*, the place being so much distressed by the war, that the preachers could not travel in safety.

This year there were added to the society 2047 members, and thirteen young preachers were taken on trial to travel the circuits.

It was not customary, at that time, to give an account of the preachers that died, or of those who stopped traveling; so that we cannot tell at what time some of them stopped traveling, or the cause of their stopping.

Some of the British preachers who were at that conference, intended to return to England; but they agreed to stay and continue preaching among the Americans, until their way should be quite open and clear for them to return to their native country. About the middle of September, Mr. Rankin and Mr. Rodda left the continent, and sailed for Europe. But some time before they embarked, Mr. Rodda had taken some imprudent steps in favor of the Tories; a company of them having collected together in Delaware state, below Philadelphia. Mr. Rodda's conduct brought many sufferings and much trouble on the Methodist preachers and people.

1778.—The sixth conference was in *Leesburg*, in *Virginia*, on the 19th day of May; at which time they added six new circuits. Four of them were in Virginia, *Berkley*, *Fluvanna*, *James-City*, and *Luenburg*. And in *North Carolina*, the preachers divided the one that was there before, so as to form three circuits, and they were now called *Roanoke*, *Tar-River*, and *New-Hope*.

In the return of members this year, we found we had lost in numbers 873. This was the first time that we came short of the old number given in the preceding year. This decrease was wholly owing to the breaches made upon many societies and circuits by the distresses of war; and some of our preachers had scruples of conscience about taking the oath of allegiance in the different states where they labored, and of course were forced to leave their stations.

This was a year of distress, and uncommon troubles. The war on one hand, and persecution on the other, the preachers were separated from their flocks, and all conspired to increase the burden of Christians.

In the beginning of March, G. Shadford left his friends, after he had kept a day of private fasting and prayer with Mr. Asbury, in order to know the will of God. He then said he saw his way clear to return to England. Mr. Asbu-

ry saw it best to abide in America; so they parted, and each one acted as he thought right.

On the fifth of March, Mr. Asbury began to lie by at Thomas White's, in the Delaware state, where he shut himself up. Speaking of himself, he says, "On conscientious principles I was a non-juror, and could not preach in the state of Maryland; and therefore withdrew to the Dalaware state, where the clergy were not required to take the state oath: though with a clear conscience, I could have taken the oath of the Delaware state, had it been required; and would have done it, had I not been prevented by a tender fear of hurting the scrupulous consciences of others."

"My compelled seclusion, in the beginning of the war, in the state of Delaware, was in no wise a season of inactivity; on the contrary, except about two months of retirement, from the direst necessity, it was the most active, the most useful, and most afflictive part of my life. If I spent a few dumb sabbaths—if I did not, for a short time, steal after dark, or through the gloom of the woods, as was my wont, from house to house, to enforce that truth, I (an only child,) had left father and mother, and crossed the ocean to proclaim, I shall not be blamed, I hope, when it is known that my patron, good and respectable Thomas White, who promised me security and secrecy, was himself taken into custody by the light-horse patrole: if such things happened to him, what might I expect, a fugitive and an Englishman? In these very years, we added eighteen hundred members to the society, and laid a broad and deep foundation for the wonderful success Methodism has met with in that quarter. The children and the children's children of those who witnessed my labors and my sufferings in that day of peril and affliction, now rise up by hundreds to bless me. Where are the witnesses themselves? Alas! there remain not five perhaps, whom I could summon to attest the truth of this statement."

1779.—On the 18th day of May, the seventh conference was held at the *Broken-back church* in *Fluvanna* county in *Virginia*. Previous to this conference, the preachers in the northern states held a preparatory conference at *Thomas White's*, in Delaware state, in order that their sentiments might be carried by brother *William Waters*, to the conference in *Virginia*; for it was judged to be improper for brother *Asbury* to leave his solitary retreat, to go to *Virginia*. However the conference determined that brother *Asbury* ought to act as *general assistant* in America.

We had a large addition of members to the society this year. In the different circuits we added 2182 members. In some places the work of God spread rapidly, and bore down all before it. But in many places the societies were thrown into great disorder and confusion, by reason of the war which continued to rage through the land. Many of the men were drafted, and taken into the army, and many people left their homes, to keep out of the way of the enemy, and to save their property, by carrying it with them.

In the course of this year, there were great troubles and distresses in the Methodist connexion, both among preachers and private members; owing to an unhappy division which took place among the traveling preachers. Many of our traveling preachers in *Virginia* and *North Carolina*, seeing and feeling the want of the instituted means of grace among our societies; (and there being but few church ministers in that part of the country, and most of them strangers to heartfelt religion,) concluded, that if God had called them to preach, he had called them also to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They met together at the conference held at the *Booken back* church this year, and after consulting together, the conference chose a committee for the purpose of ordaining ministers. The committee thus chosen, first ordained themselves, and then proceeded to ordain and set apart others

preachers for the same purpose, that they might administer the holy ordinances to the church of Christ. The preachers thus ordained, went forth preaching the gospel in their circuits as formerly, and administered the sacraments wherever they went, provided the people were willing to partake with them. Most part of our preachers in the south, fell in with this new plan; and as the leaders of the party were very zealous, and the greater part of them very pious men, the private members were influenced by them, and pretty generally fell in with their measures. However, some of the old Methodists would not commune with them; but steadily adhered to their former customs.

The preachers north of *Virginia*, were opposed to this step so hastily taken by their brethren in the south, and made a stand against it, believing that unless a stop could be put to this new mode of proceeding, a separation would take place among the preachers and the people. There was great cause to fear a division, and both parties trembled for the ark of God, and shuddered at the thought of dividing the church of Christ. The preachers in the south were very successful in their ministerial labors, and many souls were brought to God in the latter part of that year; and the christians were very lively in religion. These things all united to confirm the preachers in the belief, that the step they had taken was owned and honored of God. And at that time there was very little room to hope that they would ever recede from their new plan, in which they were so well established. But after all they consented, for the sake of peace, and the union of the body of Methodists, to drop the ordinances for a season, till Mr. Wesley could be consulted.

1780.—On the 24th day of April, the eighth conference met in *Baltimore*, where the northern preachers only attended; for the *Virginia* preachers had a conference appointed in that state.

The whole of the conference that met in Baltimore agreed in disapprobating the conduct of the preachers in Virginia, in respect to their ordination, and their administering the ordinances, and concluded that they did not look upon the Virginia preachers as *Methodists* in connexion with Mr. Wesley, and that conference; neither could they consider them as such unless they came back to their former standing, and to their elder brethren.

The Baltimore conference then appointed brother Asbury, brother William Waters, and brother Freeborn Garrettson to attend the conference in Virginia, and to inform the preachers in that conference, of what had been determined on in the Baltimore conference; and to let then know withal that the only condition upon which they could be united was, that they, (the Virginia preachers) should suspend the administration of the ordinances for one year: and then all the preachers to meet together, at the next annual conference to be held in Baltimore.

In the the spring of the year, some time in April, Mr. Asbury left his quiet retreat in Delaware state, where he had been lying by, (and for the most part of the time at Thomas White's) for two years and one month; and then met with the preachers in conference at Baltimore, as has been already mentioned. He then visited his brethren in Virginia, and attended the conference at the Manakin town, which began on the 8th day of May, 1780. At that time Mr. Asbury had to exert all his powers, and to use all possible prudence in order to bring about a settled peace and union among all the preachers. The most influential preachers in that separation, in favor of the ordinances, were Philip Gatch, John Dickins, and James O'Kelly. These men were much respected for their usefulness in the ministry.

After much contention and distress, Mr. Asbury proposed to the southern preachers a plan for union, which was this: that they should not administer the ordinances for a twelve

month, and that they should all then meet together in conference at Baltimore—and in the course of the year they would write to Mr. Wesley in England, and lay their situation before him, and get his advice. The plan took with the Virginia preachers, and they consented to the proposal. By this prudent step, a division was prevented, and a blessed union restored. The preachers pretty generally went from that conference to their circuits, with thankful hearts that the breach was healed, and union restored to the connexion.

Mr. Asbury then traveled through the different circuits in the south parts of *Virginia*, and from thence into *North Carolina*, through Roanoak, Tar River, and New Hope circuits; and by his being often with the preachers, and among the people in the south, the divisive spirit died away; and the preachers and people by degrees became more reconciled to the old plan, and to the old preachers; and peace and harmony were once more established throughout the connexion.

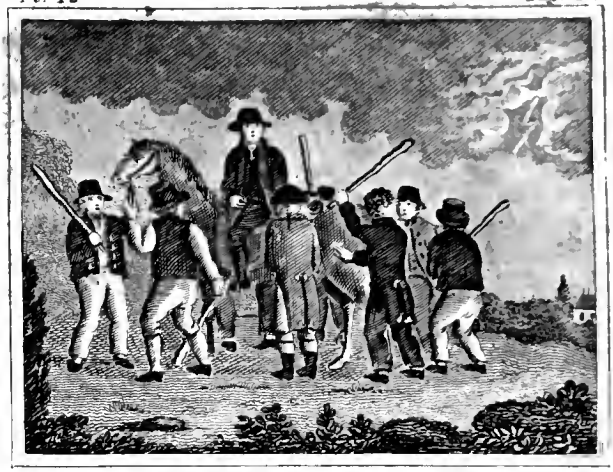
Notwithstanding the difficulties which were found among the preachers on account of the ordinances, there was a gracious revival of religion in many places this year, and especially on the Eastern shore of *Maryland*. Yet in many places the circuits and societies were so much interrupted by the armies, both of our friends and of our enemies, which were marching through the country, that we had not as many members in society at conference, as we had the year before. Indeed, some of the circuits were wholly forsaken, and no return of the members could be made.

Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, in his journal, says,—"Thursday, Feb. 10th, 1780, I arose very early in the morning, and addressed the throne of grace. The Lord wonderfully refreshed my soul, and I felt a willingness to suffer whatever he might permit to come upon me for the sake of his cause. I opened my mind to Mr. Asbury, who was at Mr.

W.'s, and he seemed very desirous I should accept the invitation. He then commended me to the Lord in prayer, and I set out in good spirits with a strong hope that good would be done. The first day I got half way, and had a comfortable night. February 11th was a day of deep exercise. Are others distressed in the way that I have been? I traveled on seemingly with the weight of a mill stone. I wept bitterly as I passed along, and several times stopped my horse intending to turn back, but was still induced to pursue my way. I got to my dear friend Mr. Arey's some time before night; and the burden which I felt all the way left me at his door. The dismission of it was perceptible, for my spirit did rejoice in God my Savior. I was conducted into a private room, where the Lord let me know that I was in the very place in which he would have me.

"In the evening the family were gathered together for prayer: I shall never forget the time: I suppose about twelve white and black were present. The power of the Lord came among us: Mrs. Arey was so filled with the new wine of Christ's kingdom, that she sunk to the floor, blessing and praising the Lord. And many of the blacks were much wrought upon. This night was a time of great refreshment to me."

The three following days Mr. Garrettson preached in the neighborhood to numerous and attentive congregations, most of whom were greatly affected under the word, and a gracious work commenced among the people. Proceeding to another part of the county, he observes, "One man was deeply affected only by seeing us. I preached at Colonel Vicery's, a clever man, who afterwards became a great friend to us, and to himself too. The fields are white for harvest, but the wicked rage, and invent lies and mischief. The county court was sitting, and some of the heads of it were determined by some means to clear the place of such a troublesome fellow. For a pretence, they charged me



FREEBORN GARRETTSON
assailed by a mob

GARRETTSON IN PRISON

with toryism; and I was informed, gave a very wicked man liberty, and promised to protect him in taking my life. For this purpose he was to lie in wait for me the next day. It providentally reached my ears that night before I went to bed, and as the wicked seemed thus inclined, I thought it expedient to withdraw to Mr. Arey's, where I remained two days; but being pressed in spirit, I could stay no longer, so I went to another part of the county. Many came out to hear, and the word was still attended with power to some hearts.

"Saturday 25th, my spirit was solemn, and I could not but expect that something uncommon would transpire. I withdrew to the woods, and spent much time before the Lord. I preached with freedom to a weeping flock, my friend Arey, who was a magistrate, and a man of note in the county, accompanying me to the place. In the evening we were repairing to his house, being about to preach there the next day; when a company of men, who had embodied themselves, waylaid me, with an intention to take me to jail. About sunset they surrounded us, and called me their prisoner. They beat my horse, cursed and swore, but did not strike me. Some time after night, they took me to a magistrate who was as much my enemy as any of them. When I was judged, and condemned for preaching the gospel, the keeper of the peace, who sat in his great chair, immediately wrote a mittimus and ordered me to jail. I asked him if he had never heard of an affair in Talbot county. Brother I. Hartley,* was committed to jail for the

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* Mr. Garrettson adds the following particulars in a note: "Brother Hartley, a dear good man, and an excellent preacher, was pressed in spirit, he could no longer contain, and the rulers laid hands on him, and confined him in Talbot Jail: but he preached powerfully through the window. The blessed God owned his word, and he was instrumental in raising a large society. He was confined a long time, till finally

same crime, that of preaching the gospel; soon after the magistrate was taken sick unto death, and sent for this same preacher out of confinement to pray for him. He then made this confession, 'When I sent you to jail,' said he, 'I was fighting against God, and now I am about to leave the world, pray for me.' His family were called in, and he said to his wife, 'This is a servant of God; and when I die, I request he may preach at my funeral. You need not think I have not my senses; this is the true faith.' He then gave brother Hartley charge of his family, and desired them to embrace that profession. Now, said I, I beseech you to think seriously of what you have done, and prepare to meet God. Be you assured, I am not ashamed of the cross of Christ, for I consider it an honor to be imprisoned for the gospel of my Lord. My horse was brought, and about twelve of the company were to attend me to jail. They surrounded me, and two, one on each side, held my horse's bridle. The night was very dark; and before we got a mile from the house, on a sudden there was a very uncommon flash of lightning, and in less than a minute, all my foes were dispersed: my friend Arey was a little before the company, so that I was left alone. I was reminded of that place of scripture, where our Lord's enemies fell to the ground; and then this portion of Scripture came to me, 'Stand still and see the salvation of God.' It was a very dark cloudy night, and had rained a little. I sat on my horse alone, and though I called several times there was no answer. I went on, but had not got far before I met my friend Mr. Arey, returning to look for me.

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they thought he might as well preach without as within jail. Shortly after he was set at liberty, he married a pious young lady, and located. He did not live many years, but while he did live, he was very useful and adorned his Christian and ministerial character. He died in the Lord, and went to glory."

He had accompanied me throughout the whole of this affair. We rode on, talking of the goodness of God till we came to a little cottage by the road side, where we found two of my guards almost frightened out of their wits. I told them if I was to go to jail that night, we ought to be on our way, for it was getting late. 'O! no,' said one of them, 'let us stay until the morning.' My friend and I rode on, and it was not long ere we had a beautiful clear night. We had not rode long before the company collected again, from whence I know not. However, they appeared to be amazingly intimidated, and the leader of the company rode by the side of me, and said, 'Sir, do you think the affair happened on our account?' I told him that I would have him to judge for himself; reminding him of the awfulness of the day of judgment, and the necessity there was of preparing to meet the judge of the whole earth. One of the company swore an oath, and another immediately reproved him, saying, 'How can you swear at such a time as this?' At length the company stopped, and one said, 'We had better give him up for the present;' so they turned their horses and went back. My friend and I pursued our way. True it is, 'the wicked are like the troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt.' We had not gone far before they pursued us again, and said, 'We cannot give him up.' They accompanied us a few minutes, again left us, and we saw no more of them that night. A little before midnight, we arrived safe at my friend's house. Blessed be God, the dear waiting family were looking out, and received us with joy: and we had a precious sweet family meeting. I retired to my room as humble as a little child, praising my great deliverer.

"During the remainder of the night, though asleep, I was transported with the visions, which passed through my mind. I had a confidence in the morning that my beloved Lord would support me. I saw in the visions of the night

many sharp and terrible weapons formed against me; but none could penetrate or hurt me; for as soon as they came near me they were turned into feathers, and brushed by me as soft as down.

"Sunday 27th, at eleven o'clock, many came out to hear the word, and it was expected my enemies would be upon me. I was informed that not a few brought short clubs under their coats to defend me in case of an attack, for many had just about religion enough to fight for it. As I was giving out the hymn, standing between the hall and room doors, about twenty of my persecutors came up in a body. I was amazed to see one of them who was an old man, and his head as white as a sheet. The ringleader rushed forward, presented a pistol, and laid hold of me Blessed be God! my confidence was so strong in him, that I feared none of these things. Some of the audience, who stood next me, gave me a sudden jerk; I was presently in the room, and the door shut. As soon as I could I opened it, and beckoning to my friends, desired that they would not injure my enemies; that I did not want to keep from them, but was willing to go to jail. If I had not spoken in this manner, I believe much blood would have been shed. I began to exhort, and almost the whole congregation were in tears. The women in a particular manner were amazingly agitated. I desired my horse to be got, and I was accompanied to Cambridge, where I was kept in a tavern, from twelve o'clock till near sun set, surrounded by the wicked; and it was a great mercy of God that my life was preserved.

"I told my enemies not to give themselves any uneasiness, for I thought it an honor to suffer in the cause of Christ. After my horse and baggage were ready, and I was equipped for the expedition, we started two and two. My friend and I rode together, and half the company before, and half behind. This was on the Lord's day. When we

came to the hotel, my friend and I were permitted to occupy a room adjoining a large public room. The inhabitants of the place seemed to be coming and going the whole of the day, and kept the room filled the whole of the time, drinking and rejoicing over their prey. My friend was a young soldier, and the trial was too great for him. One of the company, a stout man, was about to break into abuse, (for their hatred against him was almost as great as it was against me,) and actually did strike at him with all his force with a large loaded whip, and in all probability would have killed him, had not the whip struck the top of the door. My friend was young and active, and he instantly sprung, and as quick as a flash, sent his fist into the fellow's temple, who like a Goliah under David's sling, fell flat to the floor. and there was a roar of laughter through the house, and a declaration, 'the Methodists will fight.' At a convenient time I got my friend round the neck, and wept and told him he had grieved my spirit. He said he was sorry on account of grieving me; but that it was almost as sudden as thought, that it appeared to him that his arm was nerved for the purpose, and that he did not feel as if he had done wrong. And I must say, I think they behaved rather better afterwards.

"A little before night, I was thrust into prison, and my enemies took away the key, that none might minister to my necessities. I had a dirty floor for my bed, my saddle bags for my pillow, and two large windows open, with a cold east wind blowing upon me: but I had great consolation in my Lord, and could say, 'Thy will be done.' During my confinement here, I was much drawn out in prayer, reading, writing and meditation. I believe I had the prayers of my good friend, Mr. Asbury; and the book which he sent me, Mr. Rutherford's Letters during his confinement, together with the soul comforting and strengthening letters which I received from my pious friends, were rendered a great bless-

ing to me. The Lord was remarkably good to me, so that I experienced a prison to be like a paradise; and I had a heart to pray for my worst enemies. My soul was so exceedingly happy, I scarcely knew how my days and nights passed away. The bible was never sweeter to me. I never had a greater love to God's dear children. I never saw myself more unworthy. I never saw a greater beauty in the cross of Christ; for I thought I could, if required, go cheerfully to the stake in so good a cause. I was not at all suprised with the cheerfulness of the ancient martyrs, who were able in the flames to clap their glad hands. Sweet moments I had with my dear friends who came to the prison window.

Happy the man who finds the grace,
The blessing of God's chosen race,
The wisdom coming from above,
The faith which sweetly works by love.

"Many, both acquaintances and strangers, came to visit me from far and near, and I really believe I never was the means of doing more good for the time: for the country seemed to be much alarmed, and the Methodists among whom I had labored, to whom I had written many epistles, were much stirred up to pray for me. I shall never forget the kindness I received from dear brother and sister Arey. They suffered much for the cause of God in Dorset county, for which, if faithful, they will be amply compensated in a better world.

"Mr. and Mrs. Arey were remarkably kind, and sent me every thing which was necessary. My brother Thomas, who lived about a hundred miles off, heard of my imprisonment, and came to see me, and brought a letter from Judge White to Mr. Harrison, a gentleman of note, who was the greatest enemy I had in town. After reading the letter, he not only invited my brother to put up at his house, but went and got the prison key, let my brother come in, and

next morning he came to the jail and invited him out to breakfast, and told me he would do any thing he could for me. Before this he was as bitter as gall. One day, when an old quaker friend came to see me, he came and abused him, and strove to drive him away: the quaker made him ashamed of his conduct. My enemies sent a spy, who feigned himself a penitent, and as I was coming down stairs to converse with him through the window,* it came powerfully to my mind, he is an enemy, sent if possible to draw something out of you concerning the war. He cried, and said he was a miserable sinner, that he was afraid he would go to hell, and wanted to know what he should do to be saved. I told him to leave off swearing and drunkenness, and return, and I would give him farther directions. I afterwards found he was the very character I had supposed.

"My crime of preaching the gospel was so great, that no common court could try my cause. There appeared to be a probability of my staying in jail till a general court, which would not convene in nearly twelve months. My good friend Mr. Asbury went to the governor of Maryland, and he befriended me: had I been his brother, he could not have done more for me. The manner in which he proceeded to relieve me was this,—I was an inhabitant of Maryland by birth and property: I could likewise claim a right in the Delaware state, which was still more favorable to such *pestilent fellows*. I was carried before the governor of Delaware. This gentleman was a friend to our society. He met me at the door, and welcomed me in, assuring me he would do any thing he could to help me. A recommendatory letter was immediately dispatched to the governor of Maryland; and I was entirely at liberty. O! how wonderfully did the people of Dorset rage: but the word of the Lord spread all through that county, and hundreds,

* See plate 12, p. 269.

both white and black, have experienced the love of Jesus. Since that time, I have preached to more than three thousand people in one congregation, not far from the place where I was imprisoned; and many of my worst enemies have bowed to the sceptre of our sovereign Lord. The labors of Caleb Peddicord and Chew were much blessed in this place, in the first reviving and spreading of the work.

"After I left my confinement, I was more than ever determined to be for God and none else. I travelled extensively. The Lord was with me daily, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Savior. In visiting the young societies, after I left jail, we had blessed hours: for many came to hear, sinners cried for mercy, and God's dear people rejoiced.

1781.—On the 24th day of April, the ninth conference met in Baltimore. But previous to this, a few preachers on the Eastern Shore, held a *little conference* in Delaware state, near Choptank, to make some arrangements for those preachers who could not go with them, and then adjourned (as they called it) to Baltimore; so upon the whole it was considered but one conference, at which six new circuits were taken in.

At this conference, there were twenty young preachers admitted upon trial, and sent into the circuits. We had added 2035 members to the society in the course of the year. The Lord wonderfully favored the traveling preachers, so that we spread our borders, and our numbers increased abundantly.

The greatest revival of religion among us this year, appeared to have been on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in some parts of Delaware state: where there were many, very many precious souls brought into the liberty of the children of God.

There was also a blessed revival of religion in *Virginia*, and in some parts of *North Carolina:* but the war was so distressing in those parts, that the preachers could not con-

stantly attend their circuits; and many of the societies were dispersed, and prevented from assembling together. Many of the male members were drafted, and when the militia were called out, they had to go into the army to fight, in the defence of their country. Some of them lost their lives, and some made shipwreck of the faith, and but few of them returned home with as much religion as they formerly possessed. Some of the Methodists were bound in conscience not to fight; and no threatenings could compel them to bear arms or hire a man to take their places. In consquence of this, some of them were *whipped*, some were fined, and some imprisoned; others were sent home, and many were much persecuted. The societies had much to discourage them, and but little to help them forward in religion. Yet, notwithstanding all their difficulties, they stood fast as one body, and waxed stronger and stronger in the Lord.

1782.—The tenth conference was held: which began at Ellis's Chapel, in Sussex county, in *Virginia*, on the 27th day of April, and adjourned to Baltimore on the 21st day of May.

The work had so increased and spread, that it was now found necessary to have a conference in the south every year, continuing the conference in the north as usual. Yet as the conference in the north was of the longest standing, and withal composed of the oldest preachers, it was allowed greater privileges than that in the south; especially in making rules, and forming regulations for the societies. Accordingly, when any thing was agreed to in the Virginia conference, and afterwards disapproved of in the Baltimore conference, it was dropped. But if any rule was fixed and determined on at the Baltimore conference, the preachers in the south were under the necessity of abiding by it. The southern conference was considered at that time as a convenience, and designed to accommodate the preachers in that part of the work, and to do all the business of a regu-

lar conference, except that of making or altering particular rules.

There were twenty-two questions asked and answered: and the last was, "When and where shall our next conferences be held?"—This was the first time that this question was ever found on the minutes. It was now settled and fixed to have *two conferences* in each year.

The 19th question was a very important one, as follows: "*Do the brethren in conference unanimously choose brother Asbury to act according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment, and preside over the American conference and the whole work?* A. Yes."

Considering all things, our societies were greatly blessed, and the number of our members greatly increased: and notwithstanding we were scattered, and in some places suffered loss, yet taking the whole connection throughout, we were highly favored of the Lord.

In 1783, the eleventh conference began at Ellis's meeting-house, Sussex county, *Virginia*, on the 6th day of May, and adjourned to *Baltimore*, to the 27th day of the same month.

We had thirty-five circuits, and eighty-two preachers to travel in them. We added to the society this year 1955 members. We took nineteen young preachers upon trial, so that all the circuits were well supplied.

The following was one of the questions, "Shall our friends be permitted to make spiritous liquors, sell, or drink them in drams? A. By no means; we think it wrong in its nature and consequences; and desire all our preachers to teach the people by precept and example to put away this evil."

At that time it was but seldom known that a Methodist preacher drank spiritous liquors, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

The conference appointed two days for public thanksgiving throughout our connection, for the peace which was established between the United States of *America*, and the *British* nation: for our temporal and spiritual prosperity, and for the glorious revival of the work of God which had taken place among us. The first thanksgiving day was to be on the first Thursday in July, and the second was to be on the first Thursday in October. They also appointed two fast days, the first to be held on the first Friday in the following January; and the second, on the first Friday in April.

The revolutionary war being now closed, and a general peace established, we could go into all parts of the country without fear; and we soon began to enlarge our borders, and to preach in many places where we had not been before. We soon saw the fruit of our labors in the new circuits, and in various parts of the country, even in old places where we had preached in former years with but little success.

One thing in particular, that opened the way for the spreading of the gospel by our preachers was this: during the war, which had continued seven or eight years, many of the members of our societies had, through fear, necessity, or choice, moved into the back settlements, and into new parts of the country: and as soon as the national peace was settled, and the way was open, they solicited us to come among them; and by their earnest and frequent petitions, both verbal and written, we were prevailed on, and encouraged to go among them: and they were ready to receive us with open hands and willing hearts, and to cry out, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

The intercourse being now open between us and *England*, we thought there was danger of preachers or members coming from that country, to preach or live among us, whose

characters might not be good. In order that we might not be imposed upon, the following regulation was adopted.

Q. "*How shall we conduct ourselves towards the European Methodists, should they come to this continent?*

A. We will not receive them without a letter of recommendation, the truth of which we have no reason to doubt."

In the latter part of this year, Mr. Wesley, in *England*, wrote a letter to *America*, which agreed with the last minute; the following is an extract from the letter.

Bristol, October 3, 1783.

1. Let all of you be determined to abide by the methodist doctrine, and discipline, published in the four volumes of sermons and the notes upon the New Testament, together with the large minutes of the conference.

2. Beware of preachers coming from *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, without a full recommendation from me. Three of our traveling preachers here eagerly desired to go to *America;* but I could not approve of it by any means: because I am not satisfied that they thoroughly like either our discipline or doctrine: I think they differ from our judgment, in one or both. Therefore, if these or any others come without my recommendation, take care how you receive them.

3. Neither should you receive any preachers, however recommended, who will not be subject to the *American* conference, and cheerfully conform to the minutes both of the *English* and *American* conferences.

4. I do not wish our *American* brethren to receive any, who make any difficulty of receiving *Francis Asbury* as the general assistant.

Undoubtedly the greatest danger to the work of God in *America*, is likely to arise either from preachers coming from Europe, or from such as will arise from among yourselves, speaking perverse things, or bringing in among you

new doctrines, particularly Calvinism. You should guard against this with all possible care, for it is far easier to keep them out than to thrust them out.

I commend you all to the grace of God, and am your affectionate friend and brother, JOHN WESLEY.

In 1784, the twelfth conference began at Ellis's chapel in *Virginia*, on the 30th day of April, and ended in Baltimore, on the 28th of May. It was considered as but one conference, although they met first in *Virginia*, and then adjourned to Baltimore, where the business was finished.

We agreed, that if any European Methodist preachers should come over recommended by Mr. Wesley, and would be subject to the *American* conference, preach the Methedist doctrine, keep the circuits they were appointed to, and be subject to Francis Asbury as general assistant, while he stands approved by Mr. Wesley and the conference we will receive them; but if they walk contrary to the above directions, no appointment shall prevent them from being excluded from our connexion.

We had a gracious revival of religion this year in many of the frontier circuits, and the way was opening fast for us to enlarge our borders, and to spread the gospel through various places where we had never been before. The call of the people was great, for more laborers to be sent into the harvest.

CHAPTER II.

From the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1784, to the first delegated general Conference, 1812—a period of 28 years.

THE Methodists had until this time one *form* both of worship and discipline in every part of the world; but the in-

dependence of these United States of *America*, confirmed by the peace of 1783, occasioned an extraordinary change in this respect. During the war our societies were deprived of the ordinances of *baptism, and the Lord's supper:* for the ministers of the church of England had mostly left their parishes: some of them were silenced, others left off preaching, because they could not procure a maintenance by it; and many more went into the British dominions. From the time of the peace no ecclesiastical authority of any kind was either exercised or claimed by any person or persons whatsoever. In this situation, we desired Mr. Wesley's advice and assistance; and as he observes, "his scruples being at an end, he conceived himself at perfect liberty to exercise that right which he doubted not God had given him."

At the British conference held at Leeds in July, 1784, Mr. Wesley declared his intention of sending Dr. *Coke* and some other preachers to *America*. Mr. *Richard Whatcoat*, and Mr. *Thomas Vasey* offered themselves as missionaries for that purpose, and were accepted. But before they sailed, Mr. *Wesley* wrote to Dr. *Coke* then in *London*, desiring him to meet him in *Bristol*, to receive fuller powers; and to bring the Rev. Mr. *Creighton* with him. The Dr. and Mr. *Creighton* accordingly met him in Bristol; where Mr. *Wesley* with the assistance of Dr. *Coke* and Mr. *Creighton*, ordained *Richard Whatcoat* and Mr. *Thomas Vasey*, presbyters for *America:* and, did afterwards ordain Dr. *Coke* a superintendent, giving him letters of ordination, under his hand and seal. Previous to this Dr. *Coke* had been ordained a presbyter by a bishop of the church of England.

Dr. *Coke* with Messrs. *Whatcoat* and *Vasey* sailed for *America*, in the month of September, and landed at *New York* on the third day of November.

By these preachers, Mr. *Wesley* wrote a letter to us in *America*, to be printed and circulated among us; the following is the letter.

Bristol, September 10, 1784.

To Dr. *Coke*, Dr. *Asbury*, and our brethren in *North America.*

"1. By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of *North America* are totally disjoined from the British empire, and erected into Independent States. The English government has no authority over them either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of *Holland.* A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the state assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States, desire my advice: and in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

"2. Lord KING's account of the primitive church convinced me many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same orders, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace sake but because I was determined, as little as possible to violate the established order of the national church to which I belonged.

"3. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, and but few parish ministers. So that for some hundred miles together there are none either to baptise and administer the Lord's supper. Here therefore my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

"4. I have accordingly appointed Dr. *Coke* and Mr. *Francis Asbury*, to be joint *superintendents* over our brethren in North America. As also *Richard Whatcoat* and *Thom-*

as Vasey, to act as *elders* among them, by baptising and administering the Lord's Supper.

"5. If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

"6. It has indeed been proposed, to desire the *English* bishops to ordain part of our preachers for *America*. But to this I object, 1. I desired the bishop of *London* to ordain one only; but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceeding; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them *now*, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us? 4. As our *American* brethren are now totally disentangled both from the state, and from the *English* hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God hath so strangely made them free.

"JOHN WESLEY."

The following is a copy of the letters testimonial, delivered by Mr. Wesley to Dr. Coke, after his ordination, agreeably to the advice of Mr. Fletcher. It was taken by Mr. Drew, from the original, in Mr. Wesley's own hand writing preserved among the papers of Dr. Coke.

"To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late fellow of Lincoln college in Oxford, presbyter of the church of England, sendeth greeting.

"Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's sup-

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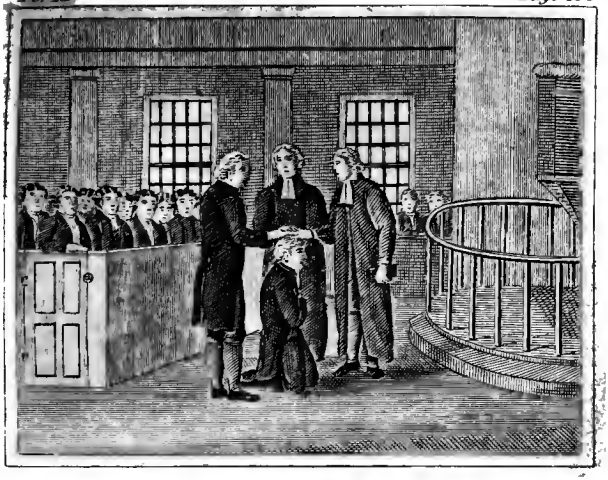

FRANCIS ASBURY
was ordained Bishop by Dr. Coke in 1784

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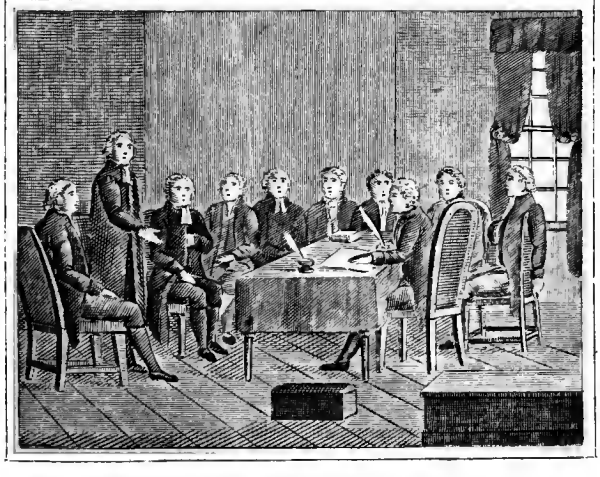

THE FIRST CONFERENCE
was held in Philadelphia in 1773

per according to the usuage of the same church: and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers—

"Know all men that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty four.

"JOHN WESLEY."

December 27th, 1784.—The thirteenth conference began in *Baltimore*, which was considered to be a general conference in which *Thomas Coke* and *Francis Asbury* presided.

At this conference we formed ourselves into a regular church, by the name of *The Methodist Episcopal Church;* making at the same time the episcopal office elective, and the elective superintendent amenable to the body of ministers and preachers.

Mr. *Asbury* was appointed a *superintendent* by Mr. *Wesley*, yet he would not submit to be ordained, unless he could be voted in by the conference; when it was put to vote, he was unanimously chosen. He was then ordained *Deacon*, then *Elder* and afterwards *Superintendent*, before the end of the conference.* At the request of Mr. Asbury, when

* Plate 13, p. 284.

he was about to be ordained a Superintendent, Mr. Otterbine, a German Minister, who was a pious man, assisted in his ordination by the laying on of his hands with the other ministers.

At this conference there were thirteen preachers elected to the Elder's office, and most of them were ordained—their names were,

Freeborn Garrettson,*	James O. Cromwell,*
William Gill,	John Tunnell,
Le Roy Cole,	Nelson Reed,
John Hagerty,	Jeremiah Lambert,†
Reuben Ellis,	Beverly Allen.‡
James O'Kelly,	Henry Willis,§
Richard Ivey,	

They also elected three Deacons, John Dickins, Caleb Boyer, and Ignatius Pigman. Mr. Boyer was not present.

Being now formed into a church, a regular plan of proceeding was laid, and a form of discipline drawn up. In the minutes of this conference, there were eighty one questions with answers, a few of which I shall take notice of. If any one wishes to see the whole, he may read the minutes of that general conference.

This being the beginning of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will be necessary to take particular notice of those regulations or rules, which were formed at that time, especially such as had not been previously practiced by us.

Q. 2. "What can be done in order to the future union of the Methodists?"

* Mr. Garrettson, and Mr. Cromwell were ordained for Nova Scotia, and were sent there immediately afterwards.

† Mr. Lambert, was ordained for Antigua, in the west Indies.

‡ Mr. Allen was not ordained until the conference held at Green Hills in North Carolina, in the latter part of April, 1785.

§ Mr. Willis was not at the conference; but was ordained a few weeks afterwards by the Bishop and one Elder only.

A. "During the life of the Reverend Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his Sons in the Gospel, ready in matters belonging to the church government, to obey his commands. And we do engage after his death, to do every thing that we judge consistent with the cause of religion in *America*, and the political interests of these states, to preserve and promote our Union with the Methodists in *Europe*."

This engagement to obey Mr. Wesley's commands "in matters belonging to church government," was afterwards the cause of some uneasiness: which will be noticed in its proper place.

Q. 3. "As the ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs of these United States have passed through a very considerable change by the revolution, what plan of church government shall we hereafter pursue?"

A. "We will form ourselves into an Episcopal church, under the direction of superintendents, elders, deacons, and helpers, according to the forms of ordination annexed to our liturgy, and the form of discipline set forth in these minutes."

Q. 4. "What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the Methodist preachers?"

A. "To reform the continent, and to spread scriptural holiness over these lands."

Q. 29. "If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no Superintendent remaining in our church, what shall we do?"

A. "The conference shall elect a Superintendent, and the Elders, or any three of them, shall ordain him according to our liturgy."

Another rule was, that if a Superintendent ceases from traveling, without the consent of the conference, he shall not thereafter exercise any ministerial function whatsoever in our church." The same rule was also made for the

Elders and Deacons, in case they should cease to travel without the consent of the conference.

At this time the prayer book, as revised by Mr. Wesley, was introduced among us; and in the large towns, and in some country places, our preachers read prayers on the Lord's day: and in some cases the preachers read part of the morning service on Wednesdays and Fridays. But some of the preachers who had been long accustomed to pray extempore, were unwilling to adopt this new plan: being fully satisfied that they could pray better, and with more devotion while their eyes were shut, than they could with their eyes open. After a few years the prayer book was laid aside, and has never been used since in public worship.

The Superintendents, and some of the Elders, introduced the custom of wearing gowns and bands, but it was opposed by many of the preachers, as well as private members, who looked upon it as needless and *superfluous*. Having made a stand against it, after a few years it was given up, and has never been introduced among us since.

The Methodists were pretty generally pleased at our becoming a church, and heartily united together in the plan which the conference had adopted. And from that time religion greatly revived.

Mr. Wesley when pressed and goaded by his brother's severe remarks, concerning his thus acting as a bishop, he answered, "I firmly believe that I am a Scriptural Επισκοπος, as much as any man in England, or in Europe: for the *uninterrupted succession* I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove. But this does in no wise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England; from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago." He gave to those Επισκοποι whom he ordained the modest, but highly expressive, title of *superintendents*, and desired that no other might be used. That the Lord

has greatly blessed this boon to the American societies is evident by their great and continued increase. The numbers in the various societies, when Dr. Coke went over, were about fifteen thousand. Six years after, they had increased to nearly seventy thousand: and in the year 1820 they were two hundred and eighty thousand!

Section I.—*Episcopacy.*

A certain writer's first inquiry is, "What views do ecclesiastical writers give us of an episcopal form of church government?"

In answer to this inquiry, he quotes certain authorities in support of the following positions, viz.

That "Episcopalians, in the strict sense of the word, are those who maintain that episcopacy is of apostolic institution, or that the church of Christ has ever been governed by three distinct orders, bishops, presbyters or priests, and deacons;—that no one has a right to execute the ministerial office, without having previously received a divine commission;—and the exclusive right of granting this commission is vested in the bishops as successors of the apostles."

That "it is a principle universally established among Episcopalians, that a succession from the apostles in the order of bishops, as an order superior to and distinct from presbyters, is a requisite without which a *valid Christian ministry* cannot be preserved; and that such bishops alone possess the power of ordaining and commissioning ministers to feed the flock of Christ."

That "since the distinction of bishops and presbyters has been of divine appointment, it necessarily follows that the power of ordination, which is the chief mark of this distinction, was reserved to the bishops by the same appointment."

This writer adds, "We have here some of the most prominent features of an episcopal church, as laid down by writers of great celebrity. We would now ask our brethren who say Mr. Wesley recommended the episcopal mode of church government, if there is in any of the letters which he wrote a single line that would lead us to suppose that he held any one of the foregoing particulars? Nay did he not positively say he did not hold them? What kind of an episcopal government then must it be that has not in it a single feature of episcopacy as described by ecclesiastical writers?"

But did not this writer know that there are "ecclesiastical writers" who describe "episcopacy" with *other* features? If he *did not*, his want of information is greater than we could have imagined. If he *did*, his argument is not ingenuous. We can scarcely believe that it can have imposed on himself: and its certainly too glaringly fallacious to be imposed on others.

"It ought to be understood," says Dr. Samuel Miller, "that among those who espouse the episcopal side,—there are three classes.

"The first consists of those who believe that neither Christ nor his apostles laid down any particular form of ecclesiastical government to which the church is bound to adhere in all ages. That every church is free, consistently with the divine will, to frame her constitution agreeably to her own views, to the state of society, and to the exigencies of particular times. These prefer the episcopal government, and some of them believe that it was the primitive form; but they consider it as resting on the ground of *human expediency* alone, and not of *divine appointment*. This is well known to have been the opinion of Archbishops Cranmer, Grindal, and Whitgift; of Bishop Leighton, of Bishop Jewel, of Dr. Whitaker, of Bishop Reynolds, of Archbishop Tillotson, of Bishop Burnet, of Bishop Croft,

of Dr. Stillingfleet, and of a *long list* of the *most learned and pious divines* of the church of England, from the reformation down to the present day.

"Another class of episcopalians go farther. They suppose that the government of the church by *bishops*, as a superior order to *presbyters*, was sanctioned by apostolic example, and that it is the duty of all churches to imitate this example. But while they consider episcopacy as necessary to the *perfection* of the church, they grant that it is by no means necessary to her *existence;* and accordingly, *without hesitation*, acknowledge as true churches of Christ, many in which the episcopal doctrine is rejected, and Presbyterian principles made the basis of ecclesiastical government. The advocates of this opinion, also, have been numerous and respectable, both among the clerical and lay members of the Episcopal churches in England, and the United States. In this list appear the venerable names of Bishop Hall, Bishop Downham, Bishop Bancroft, Bishop Andrews, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Forbes, the learned Chillingworth, Archbishop Wake, Bishop Hoadly, and many more.

"A third class go much beyond either of the former. While they grant that God has left men at liberty to modify every other kind of government according to circumstances, they contend that one form of government for the church is unalterably fixed by divine appointment; that this form is episcopal; that it is absolutely *essential* to the *existence* of the church; that, of course, wherever it is wanting, there is no church, no regular ministry, no valid ordinances; and that all who are united with religious societies not conforming to this order, are 'aliens from Christ,' 'out of the appointed way to heaven,' and have no hope but in the uncovenanted mercies of God.'

"It is confidently believed," continues Dr. Miller, "that the two former classes, taken together, embrace at least

nineteeen parts out of *twenty* of all the Episcopalians in Great Britain and the United States; while so far as can be learned from the most respectable writings, and other authentic sources of information, it is only the small remaining proportion who hold the extravagant opinions assigned to the third and last of these classes."

If we may rely on the researches of Dr. Miller, then, it is so far from being true, that "it is a principle universally established among Episcopalians, that a succession from the apostles in the order of bishops, as an order superior to, and distinct from presbyters, is a requisite without which a *valid Christian ministry* cannot be preserved; and that such bishops alone possess the power of ordaining and commissioning ministers to feed the flock of Christ;" that at least *nineteen twentieths* of all the Episcopalians in Great Britain, and in the United States, hold no such sentiments.* Neither, as we shall show, were they the sentiments of Dr. Coke, or of Mr. Asbury, any more than of Mr. Wesley: nor do we believe that they are entertained by a single individual among Methodist Episcopalians, either in the ministry or in the laity.

The Irenicum of Dr. Stillingfleet, subsequently Bishop Stillingfleet, will be admitted to rank among the productions of "ecclesiastical writers" of distinguished "celebrity." From this work we shall exhibit a view of episcopacy somewhat different from that of the certain Writer.†

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* Gisborne, also, asserts that they are not the sentiments of the church of England.—*Survey*, p. 254,

† The object of Stillingfleet, in this work, was to discuss and examine the divine right of the different forms of church government, according to the principles of the law of nature, the positive laws of God, the practice of the apostles and the primitive church, and the judgment of reformed divines; in order to lay a foundation for the peace of the church, and for the accommodation of the differences which then existed. His

"I assert," says Dr. Stillingfleet, "any particular form of government agreed on by the governors of the church, consonant to the general rules of Scripture, to be by divine right; that is, God, by his own laws, hath given men a power and liberty to determine the particular form of church government among them. And hence it may appear, that though one form of government be agreeable to the word, it doth not follow that another is not, or because one is lawful, another is unlawful; but one form may be more agreeable to some parts, places, people, and times, than others are. In which case, that form of government is to be settled which is most agreeable to the present state of a place, and is most advantageously conducible to the promoting the ends of church government in that place or nation.—*Irenicum*, pp. 9, 10, 2d edit. Lond. 1662.

"Matters of fact and mere apostolical practice, may, I freely grant, receive much light from the records of succeeding ages; but they can never give a man's understanding sufficient ground to infer any divine law, arising from those facts attested to by the practice or records of succeeding ages."—*Ibid.* p. 151.

In relation to arguments drawn from the testimony of antiquity, before their authority can be admitted in this controversy, Dr. Stillingfleet affirms, "these things must be manifested:—*that such things were unquestionably the practice of those ages and persons; that their practice was the same as that of the apostles; that what they did was not from any prudential motives, but by virtue of a law which did bind them to that practice.* Which things are easily passed

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aim was to moderate the extravagant pretensions of *high churchmen*, on the one side, and the intemperate zeal of those, on the other, who were for destroying episcopacy altogether. With what ability, and excellent temper, and moderation, he performed this task, will appear in the sequel.

over by the most eager disputers of the controversy about church government, but how necessary they are to be proved, before any form of government be asserted so necessary, that without it there can be no true church, any weak undertanding may discern.—*Ib.* p. 152.

"The *reason* of apostolical practice binds still, though not the *individual action;* that as they regulated churches for the best convenieney of governing them, so should the pastors of churches now."—*Ib.* p. 181.

"Any one particular form of government in the church is neither expressed in any direct terms by Christ, nor can be deduced by just consequence; therefore no sueh form of government is instituted by Christ."—*Ib.* p. 182.

"But though nothing can be inferred from henee as to the necessity of that office to continue in the church, which Timothy and Titus were invested in; yet from the superiority of that power which they enjoyed over those churches, whether as evangelists, or as fixed bishops, these two things may be inferred: *First*, That the superiority of some church officers over others is not eontrary to the rule of the gospel: for all parties acknowledge the superiority of their power above the presbyters of the several cities; only the *continuance* of this power is disputed by many. But if they had any such power at all, it is enough for my present design, viz. that such a superiority is not eontrary to the gospel rule: or that the nature of the government of the church doth not imply a necessary equality among the governors of it. *Secondly*, Hence I infer that it is not repugnant to the eonstitution of churches in apostolical times, for men to have power over more than one particular eongregation. For such a power Timothy and Titus had; which, had it been contrary to the nature of the regimen of churches, we should never have read of in the first planted churches. So that if those popular arguments of a necessary relation between a pastor and particular people, of personal knowledge, care,

and inspection, did destroy the lawfulness of extending that care or charge to many particular congregations, they would likewise overthrow the nature, end, and design of the office which Timothy and Titus acted in: which had a relation to a multitude of particular and congregational churches. Whether their power was *extraordinary* or no, I now dispute not; but whether such a power be *repugnant to the gospel* or no, which, from their practice, it is *evident* that it is not."—*Ib.* pp. 186, 187.

The foundation of this power was laid in the power which the apostles were invested with, which was extended over many, both churches and pastors.—"If it be said, *The apostolical power, being extraordinary, must cease with the persons which enjoyed it;* I answer, *first*, What was *extraordinary* did cease; but all the dispute is, what *was* extraordinary, and what was *not*.—*Secondly*, By ceasing may be meant, either ceasing as to its *necessity*, or ceasing as to its *lawfulness*. I say not, but that the necessity of the office, as in their persons, for the first preaching and propagating the gospel, did cease with them; but that after their death, it became *unlawful* for any particular persons to take the care and charge of diocesan churches, I deny. For to make a thing *unlawful*, which was before *lawful*, there must be some *express prohibition, forbidding* any farther use of such a power, which, I suppose, men will not easily produce in the word of God."—*Ib.* pp. 194–5.

"The *extending* of any ministerial power, is not the appointing of any *new office;* because every minister of the gospel hath a relation in *actu primo*" (primarily) "to the whole church of God: the restraint and enlargement of which power is subject to positive determinations of prudence and conveniency,—and therefore if the church see it fit for some men to have this power enlarged, for better government in some, and restrained in others, that *enlargement* is the appointing *no new office*, but the making use of a pow-

er already enjoyed for the benefit of the church of God. This being a foundation tending so fully to clear the lawfulness of that government in the church, which implies a superiority and subordination of the officers of the church to one another; and the church, using her prudence in ordering the bounds of her officers, I shall do these two things: *First*, Show that the power of every minister of the gospel doth primarily, and habitually, respect the church in common. *Secondly*, That the church may, in a peculiar manner, single out some of its officers for the due administration of ecclesiastical power."—*Ib.* p. 195.

"The officers of the church may, in a peculiar manner, attribute a larger and more extensive power to some particular persons, for the more convenient exercise of their common power—grant to some the *executive part* of that power, which is originally and fundamentally common to them all. For our better understanding of this, we must consider a twofold power belonging to church officers, *a power of order*, and *a power of jurisdiction*."—*Ib.* p. 197.

Under this distinction he shows, that though every presbyter, primarily and inherently, as to *order*, possesses a capacity for the highest ministerial acts, yet "some farther authority is necessary in a church *constituted*" (or organized) "besides the power of order; and when this power, either by consent of the pastors of the church, or by the appointment of a Christian magistrate, or both, is devolved to some particular persons, though *quoad aptitudinem*" (as to the capacity or fitness) "the power remain in every presbyter, yet *quoad executionem*," (as to the actual discharge or execution of it,) "it belongs to those who are so appointed. And therefore Camero determines that ordination doth not belong to the power of order, but to the power of jurisdiction, and therefore is subject to positive restraints, by prudential determinations. By this we may understand how lawful the exercise of an *episcopal* power may be in the

church of God, supposed an *equality* in all church officers as to the power of *order*. And how incongruously they speak, who supposing an equality in the presbyters of churches at first do cry out, that the church takes upon her the office of Christ, if she *delegates* any to a more *peculiar* exercise of the *power of jurisdiction*.—*Ib.* pp. 197–8.

"Before the jurisdiction of presbyters was restrained by mutual consent, in this instant doubtless, the presbyters enjoyed the same liberty that the presbyters among the Jews did of ordaining other presbyters, by that power they were invested in at their own ordination.—In the first primitive church, the presbyters all acted in common for the welfare of the church, and either did or might ordain others to the same authority with themselves; because the *intrinsical* power of order is equally in them, and in those who were after appointed governors over presbyteries. And the collation of orders doth come from the power of order, and not *merely* from the power of jurisdictiou. It being likewise *fully acknowledged* by the *schoolmen*, that bishops are *not* superior above presbyters, as to the power of *order*."—*Ib.* p. 273.

"It is evident *Jerome* attributes the first original of that *exsors potestas*," [delegated power, or power given by choice,] as he calls it elsewhere, in the bishop above presbyters, not to any apostolic institution, but *to the free choice of the presbyters themselves:* which doth fully explain what he means by *consuetudo ecclesiæ* before spoken of, viz. that which came up by a voluntary act of the governors of churches themselves.—To which we may add what Eutychius the patriarch of Alexandria, saith in his *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ*, published in Arabic by our most learned Selden, who expressly affirms, *that the twelve presbyters constituted by* Mark *upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him, and blessed him, and made him patriarch*."—*Ib.* p. 274.

"Antonius de Rosellis fully expresseth my meaning in this;" —(in the first period of the church,) "*Every presbyter and presbyters did ordain indifferently, and thence arose schisms:* thence the liberty was restrained and reserved peculiarly to some person who did act in the several presbyteries, as the נשיא or *Prince of the Sanhedrim*,—both parties granting that in the church such a restraint was laid upon the liberty of ordaining presbyters: and the exercise of that power may be restrained still, granting it to be radically and intrinsically in them. So that this controversy is not such as should divide the church. For those that are for ordinations only by a superior order in the church, acknowledging a radical power for ordination in presbyters, which may be exercised in case of necessity, do thereby make it evident, that none who grant that, do think that any positive law of God hath forbidden presbyters the power of ordination: for then it must be wholly *unlawful*, and so in case of necessity it cannot be valid. Which doctrine I dare with some confidence assert to be a stranger to our Church of England,—on the other side, those who hold ordinations by presbyters *lawful*, do not therefore hold them *necessary*, but it being a matter of liberty, and not of necessity—this power they may be restrained by those who have the care of the church's peace, and matters of liberty being restrained, ought to be submitted to, in order to the church's peace."—Ib. p. 276.

"In the matter itself, I believe upon the strictest inquiry Medina's judgment will prove true, that Jerome, Austin, Ambrose, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, were all of Aerius his judgments as to the identity of both name and order of bishops and presbyters in the primitive church; but here lay the difference. Aerius from hence proceeded to separation from bishops and their churches, because they were bishops. And Blondell well observes that the main ground why Aerius was condemned, was for unnecessary separation from the church of Sebastia;

and those bishops, too, who agreed with him in other things, —whereas Jerome was so far from thinking it necessary to cause a schism in the church, by separating from bishops, that his opinion is clear, that the first institution of them was for preventing schisms; and therefore, for peace and unity, he thought their institution very useful in the church of God." —Ib. pp. 476–7.

"When the apostles were taken out of the way, who kept the main power in their own hands, of ruling their several presbyteries, or delegated some to do it, (who had a main hand in planting churches with the apostles, and thence are called, in Scripture, sometimes fellow laborers in the Lord, and sometimes evangelists, and by Theodoret *apostles*, but of a *second order*,) after, I say, these were deceased, and the main power left in the presbyteries, the several presbyters enjoying an equal power among themselves,—the wiser and graver sort considered the abuses following the promiscuous use of this power of ordination, and withal, having in their minds the excellent frame of the government of the church, under the apostles and their deputies, and for preventing of future schisms and divisions among themselves, they *unanimously* agreed to *choose one out of their number* who was best qualified for the management of so great a trust, and to *devolve the exercise of the power of ordination and jurisdiction* to him; *yet so as that he act nothing of importance without the consent and concurrence of the presbyters*, who were still to be as the *common council* to the bishop. This I take to be the *true* and *just* account of the *original of episcopacy* in the primitive church, according to Jerome: which model of government, thus contrived and framed, sets forth to us a most lively character of that *great wisdom* and *moderation*, which *then* ruled the heads and hearts of the primitive Christians, and which, *when men have studied and searched all other ways*, (the abuses incident to this government through the corruptions of men and times being re-

trenched) *will be found the most agreeable to the primitive form, both as asserting the due interest of the presbyteries, and allowing the due honor of episcopacy*, and by the *great harmony of both*, carrying on the affairs of the church with the greatest unity, concord, and peace. *Which form of government, I cannot see how any possible reason can be produced, by either party, why they may not with cheerfulness embrace it.*"—Ib. 281–2.

"Thus we have once more cleared Jerome and the truth together; I only wish that all that are of his judgment for the practice of the primitive church, were of his temper for the practice of their own; and while they own not episcopacy as necessary by a divine right, yet (being duly moderated, and joined with presbyteries) they may embrace it, as not only a lawful, but very useful constitution in the church of God. By which, we may see, what an excellent temper may be found out, most fully consonant to the primitive church for the management of *ordinations* and *church power*, viz. BY THE PRESIDENCY OF THE BISHOP AND THE CONCURRENCE OF THE PRESBYTERY."—Ib. p. 283.

"All that I have to say then, concerning the course taken by the apostles, in settling the government of the churches, —lies in these three propositions,—viz. *That neither can we have that certainty of apostolical practice, which is necessary to constitute a divine right; nor*, secondly, *is it probable that the apostles did tie themselves up to any one fixed course in modelling churches; nor*, thirdly, *if they did, doth it necessarily follow that we must observe the same!*" —Ib. p. 287.

"In this place, lib. 4, cap. 43, he" (Irenæus) "not only asserts the succession of presbyters to the apostles, but likewise attributes the SUCCESSIO EPISCOPATUS" (*the succession of the Episcopate*) "to these very presbyters." Whence comes then the community of names still, that those who are said to succeed the apostles, are called

bishops in one place, but presbyters in another; and THE VERY SUCCESSION OF EPISCOPACY ATTRIBUTED TO PRESBYTERS?" Ib. p. 307.

"And great probability there is, that where churches were planted by presbyters, as the church of France by Andochius and Inignus, that afterwards upon the increase of churches and presbyters to rule them, they did from among themselves choose one to be as the bishop over them, as Pothinus was at Lyons. *For we no where read in those early plantations of churches*, that where there were *presbyters already* they sent to *other* churches to desire *episcopal ordination* from *them*." Ib. p. 376.

"It is a known instance, that in the ordination of Pelagius, first bishop of Rome, there were only two bishops concerned and one presbyter; whereas, according to the fourth *canon* of the Nicene council, three bishops are absolutely required for ordination of a bishop: either then Pelagius was no canonical bishop, and so the point of succession thereby fails in the church of Rome: or else a presbyter hath the same intrinsical power of ordination which a bishop hath," [even in ordaining a bishop,] "but it is only restrained by ecclesiastical laws." Ib. p. 380.

"I believe there will, upon the most impartial survey, scarce be one church of the reformation brought, which doth embrace any form of government, because it looked upon that form as only necessary by an unalterable standing law; but *every one took up that form of government which was judged most suitable to the state and condition of their several churches*." Ib. p. 384.

"I do not doubt but to make it evident, that the main ground for settling episcopal government in this nation." (England,) "was not accounted any pretence of *divine right*, but *the conveniency of that form of church government to the state and condition of the church at the time of its reformation*." Ib. p. 385.

"The first who solemnly appeared in vindication of the English *hierarchy*, was archbishop Whitgift: yet he asserts that *no kind of government is expressed in the word, or can necessarily be concluded from thence;* and again; *no form of church government is by the Scripture prescribed to, or commanded the church of God.*" Ib. p. 394.

"That great light of the German church, Chemnitius, asserts the church's freedom and liberty as to the orders and degrees of those who superintend the affairs of the church: which he builds on a threefold foundation: 1. That the word of God no where commands *what* or *how many degrees* and *orders* of ministers there shall be. 2. That in the apostles' time, there was not *the like number* in *all* churches, as is evident from Paul's epistles. 3. That in the apostles' time in *some* places *one person* did manage the *several offices* belonging to a church. Which three propositions are the very basis of all our foregoing discourse. —The sum is, it appears by the practice of the apostolical church, that the state, condition, and necessity of every particular church, ought to be the standard and measure what offices and degrees of persons ought to be in it." Ib. pp. 397, 398.

Zanchy, an eminent Presbyterian divine, "asserts it to be in the church's power and liberty to add several orders of ministers, according as it judgeth them to tend to edification; and saith, he is far from condemning the course of the primitive church, in erecting one as bishop over the presbyters, for better managing church affairs." Ib. p. 399.

Fregevil, a divine of the French Church, (whom the English bishop Hall calls 'wise Fregevil, a deep head,') in his 'Politic Reformer,' says, "When the apostles first planted churches, the same being small and in affliction, there were not as yet any other bishops, priests, or deacons, but themselves: they were the bishops and deacons, and together served the tables. These men therefore whom God raiseth

up to plant a church, can do no better, than after the example of the apostles, to bear themselves in equal authority." Ib. p. 400.

Beza, another eminent Presbyterian divine, says, "He was so far from thinking that the human order of episcopacy was brought into the church through rashness or ambition, that none can deny it to have been very useful as long as bishops were good. And those that both will and can, let them enjoy it still.—And elsewhere professeth all reverence, esteem, and honor to be due to all such modern bishops, who strive to imitate the example of the primitive bishops, in a due reformation of the church of God according to the rule of the word. And looks on it as a most false and impudent calumny of some that said as though they" [of Geneva] "intended to prescribe their form of government to all other churches; as though they were like some ignorant fellows who think nothing good but what they do themselves." Ib. p. 406.

To invalidate the authority of Stillingfleet's Irenicum, it has been objected by some extravagant asserters of the apostolical succession of episcopacy, that it was an indigested work, written when the author was young, and was subsequently retracted. How far this representation is correct, the following facts will show.—After being several years engaged in the composition of that work, the author published it in 1659, at the age of twenty four. Three years afterwards, in 1662, he published a second edition; and the same year he gave to the world his Origines Sacræ. Soon after these publications, he met his diocesan, the celebrated bishop Saunderson, at a visitation. The bishop seeing so young a man, could hardly believe it was Stillingfleet, whom he had hitherto known only by his writings; and, after having embraced him, said, He much rather expected to have seen one as considerable for his *age*, as he had already shown himself for his learning. See the Life of Bishop

Stillingfleet, pp. 12—16, as quoted by Dr. Miller.—"When a divine of acknowledged talents and learning," adds Dr. Miller, "after spending several years in a composition of moderate lenghth, deliberately commits it to the press; when, after reflecting on the subject, and hearing the remarks of his friends for three years longer, he publishes it a second time; and when, after his second publication, he is complimented for his great erudition, by one of the most able and learned dignitaries of the age, there seems little room for a charge of haste, or want of digestion."—Letters, pp. 270, 271, n.

"The truth seems to be," continues Dr. Miller, "that Dr. Stillingfleet, finding that the opinions of a number of influential men in the church were different from those which he had advanced in this work; and finding also that a fixed adherance to them might be adverse to the interest of the established church, in which he sought preferment, he made a kind of vague and feeble recantation; and wrote in favor of the apostolical origin of episcopacy. It is remarkable, however, that this prelate in answer to an accusation of inconsistency, between his early and his latter writings, on this subject, assigned another reason besides a change of opinion, viz. that the former were written '*before the laws were established.*" But in whatever degree his *opinion* may have been altered, his *reasoning* and *authorities* have undergone no change. They remain in all their force, and have never been refuted, either by himself or by others."—Ib. p. 271.

Dr. White, now bishop White, of Pennsylvania, was of opinion, that that learned prelate, Stillingfleet, was most probably not dissatisfied with that part of the Irenicum which would have been to his (Dr. White's) purpose; and which, of course, as we shall presently show, is to our purpose. Burnet, the contemporary and friend of Stillingfleet, says, (History of his own Times, anno 1661,) "To avoid

the imputation that book brought on him, he went into the humors of an high sort of people, beyond what became him, perhaps beyond his own sense of things." "The book, however," bishop White adds, "was, it seems, easier *retracted* than *refuted:* for though offensive to many of both parties, it was managed, says the same author, [Burnet,] with so much *learning* and *skill*, that none of either side ever undertook to answer it." See "The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States considered," p. 22.

"Luther, and the leading divines of his denomination, supposed that a system" [of church government] "embracing some degree of imparity" [among ministers] "was in general, expedient; and accordingly, in proceeding to organize their churches, appointed *superintendents*, who enjoyed a kind of pre eminence, and were vested with peculiar powers. But they explicitly acknowledged this office to be a *human*, and not a *divine* institution."—Miller's Letters, p. 237.

The Lutheran churches in Sweden and Denmark, are Episcopal.—See Mosheim, vol. iv, p. 279. Yet all ecclesiastical historians agree that when the Reformation was introduced into Sweden, the first ministers who undertook to ordain were *only presbyters*.—Miller's Letters, p. 240.

"It is equally certain that in the ordination of a *bishop*, if the other bishops *happen to be absent*, the more grave and aged of the ordinary pastors supply their place, and are considered as *fully invested with the ordinary power*."—Ib. p. 241.

In case of necessity, the same power is recognized by the Methodist Episcopal Church, as fully invested in her body of presbyters. Yet if by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there should at any time be no bishop remaining among us, even in this case the remaining presbyters would not themselves directly ordain new presbyters, but would first set

apart another general superintendent, or superintendents, as their constituted organ for this purpose.

Section II.—*Sentiments of Bishop White.*

In the year 1783, a pamphlet was published in Philadelphia, entitled "The case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States considered." This work has always been considered as the production of Dr. White, now Bishop White, of Pennsylvania. Dr. Miller, in his Letters, published in 1807, p. 270, attributes it to him by name; and we have not understood that its authenticity has ever been denied. A new edition of it has recently been published in Philadelphia, by Wm. Stavely, publisher of the Philadelphia Recorder, a paper edited by a distinguished clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It will be seen from this work, with what ability Dr. White argued the case of the Episcopal churches in the United States at that period; and how equally strikingly his arguments were adapted to the state of the Methodist societies at the same period.

In a "sketch of a frame of government" offered by Dr. White, he says, "In each smaller district, there should be elected a general vestry or convention, consisting of a convenient number, (the minister to be one.)——They should elect a clergyman their *permanent president;* who, in conjunction with other clergymen to be also appointed by the body, may exercise such powers as are purely spiritual, *particularly that of admitting to the ministry.*"—p. 11.

Again, "The conduct meant to be recommended, ——is to include in the proposed frame of government, *a general approbation of episcopacy*, and a declaration of an intention to procure the succession as soon as conveniently may be; but in the mean time *to carry the plan into effect without waiting for the succession.*"—Ib. p. 15.

"But it will also be said," continues Dr. White, "that the very name of '*bishop*' is offensive; if so, *change it for another;* let *the superior clergyman* be a *president*, a *superintendent*, or in plain English, and according to the literal translation of the original, an *overseer*. However, if *names* are to be reprobated, because the powers annexed to them are abused, there are few appropriated to either civil or ecclesiastical distinctions, which would retain their places in our catalogue."—Ib. p. 17.

"The other part of the proposal" of Dr. White, "was an *immediate execution of the plan, without waiting for the episcopal succession*. This is founded on the presumption, that the worship of God, and the instruction and reformation of the people, are the principal objects of ecclesiastical discipline."—Ib.

"It will be said, we ought to continue as we are, with the hope of obtaining it," [the succession,] "hereafter. But," continues Dr. White, "are the *acknowledged ordinances* of Christ's holy religion to be suspended for years, perhaps as long as the present generation shall continue, out of delicacy to a *disputed point*, and that relating only to externals?——All the obligations of conformity to the divine ordinances, all the arguments which prove the connection between public worship and the morals of a people, combine to urge the adopting some *speedy* measures, to provide for the public ministry in these churches. If such as have been above recommended," [viz. ordination by the president clergyman, in conjunction with other clergymen, appointed by the body,] "should be adopted, and the Episcopal succession afterwards obtained, any supposed imperfection of the intermediate ordinations might, *if it were judged proper*, be supplied, *without acknowledging their nullity*, by a *conditional* ordination, resembling that of *conditional baptism* in the liturgy."—Ib.

But if the "succession" had never been "afterwards obtained," there can be little doubt that Dr. White would have maintained the validity of the ordinations on his plan, without the succession. For, as he very justly argues in another place, "If even those who hold episcopacy to be of divine right, conceive the obligation to it to be not binding, when that idea would be destructive of public worship, much more must *they* think so, who indeed venerate and prefer that form, as the most ancient and eligible, but without any idea of divine right in the case. This the author believes to be the sentiment of the great body of Episcopalians in America; in which respect they have in their favor, *unquestionably* the sense of the Church of England, and, as he believes, the opinions of her most distinguished prelates for piety, virtue, and ability."—Ib. p. 25.

To make any particular form of church government, though adopted by the apostles, unalterably binding, Dr. White maintains, "it must be shown enjoined in positive precept."—Ib. He remarks farther, "that Dr. Calamy having considered it as the sense of the church," [of England,] "in the preface to the ordinal, that the three orders were of divine appointment, and urged it as a reason for nonconformity; the bishop, [Hoadly,] *with evident propriety*, remarks, that the service pronounces *no such thing:* and that therefore Dr. Calamy created a difficulty, where the church had made none; there being 'some difference,' says he, 'between these two sentences—bishops, priests, and deacons, are three distinct orders in the church, *by divine appointment*, and—*from the apostles' time* there have been in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons.' "—"The same distinction," says Dr. White, "is accurately drawn, and fully proved by Stillingfleet in the Irenicum."—Ib. p. 22, and note.

"Now," continues Dr. White, "if the form of church government rests on no other foundation, than ancient and

apostolical *practice*, it is humbly summitted to consideration whether Episcopalians will not be thought *scarcely deserving the name of Christians*, should they rather than consent to a temporary deviation, abandon every ordinance of positive and divine appointment."—Ib.

The reader will please to observe, that at the period when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, if we had not acted independently of the alledged apostolic succession, we must necessarily, for a long time at all events, have abandoned ordinances of positive and divine appointment. Mr. Wesley, also, as it had been proposed to desire the English Bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America, expressly states, 1. "I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one only, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceeding; but the matter admits of no delay." Dr. White was of the same opinion, in relation to the Episcopal churches; and was in favor of carrying his plan of ordination, "without waiting for the episcopal succession," into immediate "execution."

"Bishop Hoadly says, 'The acceptance of *reordination* by the dissenting ministers, *would not be a denial of that right, which* (as they conceived) *presbyters had to ordain.*" Ib. p. 23.

The learned Hooker also admits, that in "*the exigence of necessity*," or "*the necessity of the present*," episcopal ordination, in the line of sucession, is not indispensable. *Ecclesiastical Polity, book 7. sec.* 14.

"Had Mr. Hooker," says Dr. White, (p. 26,) "been asked to define '*the exigence of necessity*,' could he have imagined any more urgent than the case in question?"—the case of the Episcopal churches in this country at that time. —"Or, had he been enquired of concerning the '*necessities of present times*,' could he have mentioned any in the cases to which he alludes (those of Scotland and Geneva) so strongly pleading for the liberty he allows, as those now ex-

isting in America?"—at the period of writing and publishing that pamphlet. The reader has only to change the name, and the just and solid argumentation of Dr. White is as exactly applicable to the case of the Methodist societies in America, at that period, as to "the case of the Episcopal churches."

"What necessity was there," continues Dr. White, "of the 'reformed churches abroad' equal to ours? Is not an *intermediate imitation* of the ancient usage '*impracticable?*' Would not such a plan as has been proposed," (viz. ordination by a clergyman chosen as a permanent president, in conjunction with others appointed by the body,) "be conforming as far as circumstances will allow, to our ideas of the apostolic model.'"—Ib. p. 27. After quoting archbishops Usher and Cranmer, with the highest eulogies, in support of this plan, Dr. White thus concludes the argument.

"On the credit of the preceding names, the author rests this the last part of his subject; and if his sentiments should meet with an unfavorable reception, he will find no small consolation from being in a company so respectable."—Ib. p. 29.—So say we; especially since we have now added the name of Dr. White. More than forty years have elapsed since the publication of that pamphlet, yet we are not aware that it has ever been retracted. If it had been, we presume that some notice would have been given of it in the new edition just published, in the life time of the bishop, and at the place of his own residence. And, in any case, we might well say of this production, as Dr. White so appositely remarked of Stillingfleet's Irenicum;—it would be "easier RETRACTED than REFUTED."

Section III.—*Mr. Wesley's Opinion.*

"As to my own judgment," says Mr. Wesley, "I still believe the episcopal form of church government to be scrip-

tural and apostolical. I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is *prescribed* in Scripture, I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's Irenicum. I think he has unanswerably proved, that neither Christ nor his apostles *prescribe* any particular form of church government; and that the plea of *divine right* for diocesan episcopacy, was never heard of in the primitive church."—Wesley's Works, London Edition, 1813, vol. xvi, p. 26.

So far as the judgment of Mr. Wesley is concerned then, it is, on one hand, decidedly in favor of "the episcopal form of church government;" and, on the other, as decidedly against the high church pretensions.

The above extract will also serve to show the opinion which that great master of logic entertained of Stillingfleet's Irenicum.

Section IV.—*Ordination.*

With the preceding principles and authorities before us, it only remains to consider the origin and force of *ordination*, and we shall then be prepared to enter into an examination of the original organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Their custom of ordination," says Dr. Stillingfleet, "was evidently taken up by the Christians from a correspondency to the synagogue.—That under the synagogue was done by laying on of hands. A two-fold use I find of this symbolical rite, besides the solemn designation of the person on whom the hands are laid. The *first* is to denote the delivery of the person or things thus laid hands upon, for the right, use, and peculiar service of God.—The *second* end of the laying on of hands, was the solemn invocation of the Divine presence and assistance to be upon and with the

person upon whom the hands were thus laid.—Thence in all solemn prayers, wherein any person was particularly designed, they made use of this custom of imposition of hands. From which custom Augustine speaks, *Quid aliud est manuum impositio nisi oratio super hominem?*" [what is imposition of hands but prayer over a man?] "Thence when Jacob prayed over Joseph's children, he laid his hands upon them; so when Moses prayed over Joshua. The practice likewise our Savior used in blessing children, healing the sick, and the apostles conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and from thence it was conveyed into the practice of the primitive church, who used it in any more solemn invocation of the name of God in behalf of any particular persons.—But the most solemn and peculiar use of this imposition of hands among the Jews, was in the designing of any persons for any public employment among them. Not as though the *bare imposition of hands* did confer any power upon the person—but with that ceremony they joined those words whereby they did confer that authority upon them. —This custom being so generally in use among the Jews in the time when the apostles were sent forth, with authority for gathering and settling the churches, we find them accordingly make use of this, according to the former practice, *either in any more solemn invocation of the presence of God upon any persons, or designation and appointing them for any peculiar service or function.* For we have no ground to think that the apostles had any *peculiar command* for laying on their hands upon persons in prayer over them, or ordination of them. But the thing itself being enjoined them, viz. the *setting apart some persons* for the peculiar work of attendance upon the necessities of the churches by them planted, they took up and made use of a laudable rite and custom, then in use upon such occasions. And so we find the apostles using it in the solemn designation of some persons to the office of deacons:—afterwards upon an occa-

sion not heard of in the synagogue,—for the conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost. But although the occasion was extraordinary, yet the use of that rite in it was very suitable, inasmuch as those gifts did so much answer to the שכינה" (*Shekinah*) "and the רוח הקודש" [the Holy Spirit] "which the Jews conceived did rest upon those who were so ordained by imposition of hands. The next time we meet with this rite was upon a *peculiar designation* to a *particular service of persons already appointed by God for the work of the ministry*, which is of Paul and Barnabas by the prophets and teachers at Antioch; whereby God doth set forth the use of that rite of ordination to the Christian churches." Iren. pp. 264—271.

"Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office." Westminster Assembly of Divines: examined and approved by the General Assembly of the church of Scotland.—Neal, vol. v, p. 357—appendix.

A certain writer has taken pains to show that the validity of Presbyterian ordination was established by Mr. Wesley, and is the principle of the ordination of the British Conference. But who ever denied this? Is it not expressly and fully declared in our Book of Discipline, in answer to the following question;—"If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no bishop remaining in our church, what shall we do?"

The answer is—"The General Conference shall elect a bishop; and the *elders, or any three of them, who shall be appointed by the General Conference for that purpose*, shall ordain him, according to our form of ordination." Chap. i. sec. 4, quest. 2. And this answer shows both the good sense of those who framed it, and their acquaintance with ancient ecclesiastical usage. For, as Stillingfleet above quoted, says, "Great probability there is, that where churches were planted by presbyters," (as the Methodist Episcopal Church was,) "upon the increase of churches and presbyt-

ers, they did, from among themselves, choose one to be as the bishop over them.—For we no where read in those early plantations of churches, that *where there were presbyters already*, they sent to *other* churches to desire episcopal ordination from *them*." It is also in exact accordance with the practice of the church of Alexandria, which would not suffer the interference of foreign churches in consecrating their bishops, and of which the patriarch Eutychius, as quoted by Stillingfleet, "expressly affirms, that the twelve presbyters constituted by Mark, upon the vacancy of the see, did choose one out of their number to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him, and blessed him, and made him patriarch."

When this writer asserts, that "neither are the ordinations which he" (Mr. Wesley) "conferred, viewed by writers among the English Methodist—as favoring our title of Episcopacy," he stops short of the phraseology used by the very writers whom he quotes. Their language is—"He" [Mr. Wesley] "gave up episcopal ordination *as understood by high churchmen*." So do we. And so does our Discipline, clearly and unequivocally.

Section V —*Ordination of Dr. Coke.*

Having thus cleared our way, we shall now take up the ordination of Dr. Coke.

"If," says a certain writer, "Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke a bishop, in the common acceptation of that term, then did he create a church officer greater than himself, and of consequence he brought himself into subjection to Dr. Coke. by making the doctor his superior." Again; "If the doctor was constituted a bishop," ["*in the common acceptation of that term*," is here dropped,] "he was raised to a rank above a presbyter, and invested with superior powers. In that case he that was sent was greater than he that sent

him"—and "then, Mr. Wesley who was only a presbyter, and consequently inferior to a bishop, assumed the prerogative to send his superior to do a work, in his name, which he himself could not go to do."—And again;—"If the doctor, by the imposition of Mr. Wesley's hands, is created a bishop, then the objection of the bishop of Norwich lies in full force—'If a presbyter can ordain a bishop, then the greater is blessed of the less,'" &c.

We have already seen what this writer represents to be "the common acceptation" of the term bishops, (which, by the way, we have shown is *not* the common acceptation,) viz. an order of ministers distinct from presbyters *by divine appointment*, to whom the power of ordination is reserved *by the same appointment*, and is the chief mark of their distinction;—and in whom as successors of the apostles, is vested the *exclusive* right of granting the divine commission to execute the ministerial office.—Now *if* Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke in no such sense;—*if* he pretended to no such thing:—*if* neither our bishops nor the Methodist Episcopal Church, have ever pretended to any such thing,—what then? Why then it follows that all the smart sayings on this transaction, which have been repeated and copied from my Lord Bishop of Norwich down to the last copyist, are wholly wide of the mark, and are shaken both from Mr. Wesley and from us, as "the lion shakes to the air, the mists shod on his mane."—They may serve to mislead the ignorant, and such as may be captivated by sound more than by sense. But as to the argument they are perfectly nugatory.—If, says Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Moore, Mr. Wesley's position be true, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, the bishop of Norwich should have first overthrown this position, if he could, to have established his own.

But says this writer, "as Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke were of the same order,—the doctor has as good a clerical right to ordain Mr. Wesley a bishop, as Mr. Wesley had to or-

dain the doctor." As good a *clerical* right;—he seems to have felt here that his argument was lame. He knows well that the true question is not as to the mere *clerical* power of ordination, *abstractly;* but whether in the circumstances then existing, as to acknowledged *jurisdiction*, and the exigency of the times, Dr. Coke had as good a right to ordain and send Mr. Wesley to superintend the American Methodists, as Mr. Wesley had to summon a council, and to ordain and send him. And whether it was so regarded by the Methodists of that day, either in Europe or in America.

The Methodist societies in America, although under the spiritual direction of the Rev. John Wesley and his assistants, whom under God they regarded as their father and founder, yet, previously to the revolutionary war, were religious societies within the Church of England, without any provision among themselves for the administration of the ordinances. From that church they were separated, let it be carefully observed, not by any *schism* or *faction*, or any species of misconduct on their part; but by the acts of Providence, and by circumstances wholly beyond their control. The Church of England had *ceased to exist*, in America, and the Methodists here were absolutely compelled either to provide for themselves, or to live in neglect of the positive ordinances of Christ. Their case was clearly that of "the exigence of necessity," agreeably to Hooker himself; and most undeniably so agreeably to the principles then advocated by Dr. White. Our societies had suffered long, as sheep without shepherds. They had endured the privation of the ordinances till the patience of many had been exhausted, and a serious disunion was threatened; if not dissolution. A portion of the preachers and societies in the south had resolved on measures for the administration of the ordinances among themselves. This step was strenuously resisted by the conference which met in Baltimore, in 1780. That conference unanimously disapproved

of the measures adopted by their brethren in Virginia, and resolved that they would not regard them as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley, till they came back; and Francis Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and Wm. Watters, were appointed a committee to attend the Virginia conference, and inform them of these proceedings, and receive their answer. On that occasion, Mr. Asbury exerted his utmost influence to effect a re-union, and, in conjunction with his colleagues, happily succeeded. The proposal by which it was accomplished, after much discussion and distress, *originated* with him. (See Mr. Snethen's reply to J. O'Kelly, p. 8, and Lee's History, p. 73.)* It was, that they should consent to bear their privations yet longer;—to write to Mr. Wesley, and lay their situation before him, and take his advice. This proposal was agreed to;—a division was prevented; a happy union was restored; and the preachers departed with thankful hearts, to persuade the people to unite with them in long forbearance.

Yet it was not till several years after this;—not till the Church of England in America was confessedly extinct by the acknowledgment of our independence, and all hope of supplies from that quarter, in any reasonable time, if ever, had utterly failed, that Mr. Wesley resolved on the adoption of the measures which, from his relation to the Methodists, (under the true head of the church,) and their urgent solicitations, he had long before believed himself fully authorized to adopt; but which, *for peace' sake*, he had many years forborne. On the same principle, *for peace' sake*, he had desired the bishop of London to ordain

* Mr. Watters says this proposal was made "by one of their own party." This apparent discrepancy is explained by Mr. Snethen in his "Answer to J. O'Kelly's vindication." Mr. Asbury originally made the proposal to John Dickins, to whom Mr. Watters alludes. John Dickins reduced it to writing, and proposed it to the conference.

only one preacher for America, but could not prevail. Driven to this extremity, with all his societies and preachers in America, he summoned a council of grave and pious presbyters. These were in conjunction with him, *our body of presbyters*, and with their advice he acted. The venerable Fletcher was one of the council, though not present at the subsequent ordinations. Mr. Wesley's scruples were now ended, and he resolved, with the aid of other presbyters, to exercise that authority to which he believed himself called *by the providence of God*, and *by the "necessities of the times."* Now, if the episcopacy of the Church of England, (and consequently of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country,) rest on no other foundation than ancient and apostolic *practice*, we humbly submit, (in language similar to that of Bishop White on another occasion,) whether Methodists would scarcely have been deserving the name of Christians, if rather than consent to a temporary (or even to a permanent) deviation from that line of episcopacy. they had abandoned every ordinance of positive and divine appointment.

Bishop White states, as quoted by a certain writer, that a union of the Methodists in this country with the Protestant Episcopal Church, was proposed by Dr. Coke in 1791, the terms of which, on the doctor's part, as stated by bishop White, all will admit, were sufficiently humble. Why did that proposal fail? It is stated, on the same authority, that it failed in consequence of the proceedings of the convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, before whom the subject was laid in 1792. The Rev. Dr. Wyatt, of Baltimore, published in 1820, a similar statement. If this statement be correct, then the responsibility for the rendering of our deviation from that line of episcopacy *permanent*, rests on *them*. The proposed union by which our "*temporary* deviation" might have been cured, according to Dr. White's plan of *conditional* ordinations, on the principle of

conditional baptisms, was rejected by *them*. Is it then, for *them*, now to reproach us with this deviation, which had been adopted clearly, in the "exigence of necessity," and which *they*, as much as in them laid, thus contributed to render permanent. This would be both cruel and unchristian. It is not, we think, in the power of the acutest disputant to impugn the ground on which we stand without equally impugning that assumed by Dr. White, in "The case of the Episcopal churches considered." Nor to *refute* this, without refuting that. We shall have occasion to advert again to the statement respecting Dr. Coke's proposals to bishop White, and shall only add here, that, from what we have said, it must plainly appear that the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, affords no color of pretext or of countenance, to any leaders or authors of schism, faction, disorganization, or disunion. The proceedings of "our fathers" partook of no such character. Nor can the precedent of their example be pleaded by the instigators, or abettors, of any such disorders.

Episcopos, (Greek,)—episcopus, (Latin,)—a bishop, or overseer. The Hebrew, paked, as the Greek episcopos,—whence the Anglo-Saxon bischop, and our English word bishop,—is any man that hath charge and office for any business, civil or ecclesiastical. It is derived from επι (*epi*,) *super*, and σκοπειν, (*skopein*,) *intendere*,—*superintendere*, to *superintend*. And hence *superintendent*, from the Latin is of precisely the same import as *bishop* from the Greek.—"Inter Πρεσβυτερον, tamen, et Επισκοπον, hoc interest: Πρεσβυτερος, nomen est ordinis: Επισκοπος nomen in illo ordine officii." Between Bishop and presbyter there is nevertheless this difference. Presbyter is the name of an *order*. Bishop is the name of an *office* in that order. See Leigh's Critica Sacra.

Originally, "the name Επισκοποι," [*episcopoi*, bishops,] given "to the governors of the church under the gospel," was "a name importing *duty* more than *honor*; and not a title above *presbyter*." Irenicum, p. 286.

We say, then, with a certain author, that "intelligent Christians, before they either vindicate or vilify a simple name, will inquire into its precise signification." We have done so with regard to our term bishop. And the inquiry conducts us to the conclusion, that it may be vindicated, but cannot be justly vilified.

The following extract of a letter from the late Rev. and venerable Wm. Watters, will shed light on the use of the terms, among us, assistant, superintendent, and bishop.

"My Dear Brother,

"That there should be those who through prejudice think the Methodists, since they have had bishops among them, are quite a different people, is not strange. But is it not strange that those who have known them from the beginning, should admit such a thought, till they have investigated the matter thoroughly? All must know that names do not alter the nature of things. We have from the beginning had one among us who has superintended the whole work. At first this person was solely appointed by Mr. Wesley, and called the general assistant; at a time when there were none but European preachers on the continent. But why was the name of general assistant ever changed? All that will open their eyes may know why. The Methodists in England and in America formerly did not call themselves a particular church; but a religious society in connexion with different churches, but mostly with the Episcopal Church. After the revolutionary war, the Episcopal clergy became very scarce, and in far the greatest number of our societies, we had no way of receiving the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. It was this that led many

of our preachers, as you well know, to take upon them the administration of the ordinances. Mr. Rankin, who was our first general assistant, after staying the time in this country he came for, returned home. This was at a time when we had no intercourse with England, and Mr. Asbury, the only old preacher that determined (in those perilous times) to give up his parents, country, and all his natural connexions, was finally and unanimously chosen by the preachers (assembled in conference) our general assistant. He continued such, until the year 1784, when the doctor came over, and not only the name of general assistant was changed to that of superintendent, but we formed ourselves into a separate church. This change was proposed to us by Mr. Wesley, after we had craved his advice on the subject; but could not take effect till adopted by us: which was done in a deliberate formal manner, at a conference called for that purpose; in which there was not one dissenting voice. Every one of any discernment must see from Mr. Wesley's circular letter on this occasion, as well as from every part of our mode of church government, that we openly and avowedly declared ourselves episcopalians; though the doctor and Mr. Asbury were called superintendents. After a few years, the name from superintendent was changed to bishop. But from first to last, the business of general assistant, superintendent, or bishop, has been the same; only since we have become a distinct church, he has, with the assistance of two or three elders, ordained our ministers; whose business it is to preside in our conferences, and in case of an equal division on a question, he has the casting vote; but in no instance whatever has he a negative, as you are told. He has also the stationing of all the traveling preachers, under certain limitations. Which power, as it is given him by the General Conference, so it can be

lessened, or taken from him at any time conference sees fit.* But while he superintends the whole work, he cannot interfere with the particular charge of any of the preachers in their stations. To see that the preachers fill their places with propriety, and to understand the state of every station, or circuit, that he may the better make the appointment of the preachers, is no doubt, no small part of his duty; but he has nothing to do with receiving, censuring, or excluding members; this belongs wholly to the stationed preacher and members." Memoirs, p. 103.

But the question here recurs, Have we authority from Scripture, or primitive usage, for such a practice? We think we have. In Acts xiii, 1–3, we have the following account of the consecration of Barnabas and Saul:—"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Whatever may be said of the peculiar work and office of *Barnabas*, none can question the *apostleship* of Saul, afterwards called the *apostle Paul*, and that as such, he held a rank superior to the elders; and yet he was ordained to this office by those who are here called "prophets and teachers," neither of whom has ever been ranked among the apostles. The undeniable inference is, that in the apostolic days, the

* As our General Conferences were originally constituted, they possessed the power of our whole body of ministers. Whenever the powers of the present delegated General Conference are spoken of in this work, it is of course to be understood agreeably to the principles of the restrictive limitations.

inherent right of ordination was in the body of elders, as it is most manifest that neither of those who assisted in the consecration of St. Paul was higher in office than that of an elder. And as these holy men ordained Paul and Barnabas, and sent them away to plant and organize other churches in Seleucia, Cyprus, and Salamis, verses 4, 5, so Wesley and other elders of the English Church ordained Dr. Coke as a superintendent, and *sent him away*, "commended by the grace of God," to organize a church in the wilds of America. The resemblance indeed is striking, and indicates something more than "mere human contrivance."

That Timothy exercised an authority over the elders, we have already seen; and yet he, it seems, was ordained by them; for the apostle says to him, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," 1 Tim. iv, 14. It is true, that in the second epistle, ch. i, 6, the apostle exhorts him to "stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." These two passages may be reconciled either by supposing that the apostle himself ordained Timothy first to the office of a deacon,—which is according to the practice now in an episcopal church,—and that he was afterwards ordained to the office of an elder by the presbyters; or, that the apostle assisted, as president of the college of presbyters, at the ordination of Timothy to his peculiar work as an evangelist.

That the right of ordination was originally inherent in the body of elders, and that they exercised it in the manner we have supposed, namely, to create a superior officer, is also manifest from the following quotation:—"Eutychius, the patriarch of Alexandria, saith in his *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrianæ*, published in Arabic by our most learned Selden, that *the twelve presbyters constituted by* MARK, *upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands*

upon him, and blessed him, and made him patriarch." See Stillingfleet, p. 274. And even Bishop Hoadly, an avowed enemy to nonconformity, allows the truth of St. Jerome's statement, that the presbyters of Alexandria continued this practice for 200 years, from the days of St. Mark to those of Dionysius.

In this quotation we have—

1. An announcement of the fact that Mark, imitating the conduct of St. Paul, who ordained Timothy, and also of Timothy, who ordained "elders in every city," constituted or ordained elders or presbyters in the church at Alexandria.

2. That these elders then selected one as their *superior minister*, on whom they laid their hands, and thus consecrated him to his high office. By this precedent also, the act of Mr. Wesley and his associates in ordaining Dr. Coke is justified.

The true state of the case appears to be this. In the primitive church the original right, the inherent power of ordaining ministers, was considered to be in the body of elders; but as, in the increase of the work, the exercising of this right in their collective capacity became oftentimes inconvenient; and as the great, itinerating evangelists, in their extensive travels, and their success in making converts to the Christian faith, found it needful and expedient to ordain pastors to take charge of the newly gathered flocks; the power of ordination was delegated by the elders to them, that they might set the churches in order, provide for the due administration of the Christian ordinances, by "ordaining elders in every city." This right being once conceded, in after times, when the purity of the ministerial character was exchanged for pride and ambition, the power of ordaining was claimed by the successors of those primitive men of God as their original right; and hence originated the doctrine of high-toned diocesan episcopacy, founding its exclu-

sive claims to the power of ordination on a regular, uninterrupted succession of bishops, of a rank superior to elders, and possessing an authority, *jure divino*, over them and the whole church; a doctrine we believe justly classed among the fabulous legends of a corrupt church, and a fallen priesthood.

But leaving out of view for argument's sake, the recommendation of Mr. Wesley altogether, we are still prepared, in the circumstances which then existed, to defend the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Had Mr. Asbury been actuated by the dishonorable motives of ambition and self aggrandizement imputed to him, how easy had it been for him to have accomplished his purpose, and to have organized a church in America, with himself at its head, independently of Mr. Wesley, and of the whole European connexion. And what plausible pretext, or occasion, did he want? Early in the revolutionary struggle, every other English preacher had fled. He alone, through the contest, devoted himself to American Methodism, at the risk and hazard of every thing dear. Mr. Wesley himself had openly and publicly espoused the royal cause against the colonies. This greatly embarrassed the American Methodists, and especially the preachers, who were watched, and hunted, and imprisoned, and beaten, as his emissaries; and, through him, as the *disguised* emissaries of Great Britain. The societies, except in very few instances, were destitute of the sacraments. They could neither obtain baptism for their children, nor the Lord's supper for themselves. On this account, as early as 1778, Mr. Asbury was earnestly importuned to take measures that the Methodists might enjoy the same privileges as other churches. He resisted the proposal. Yet so serious was the crisis, that a large number of the preachers, to satisfy the urgent necessities of the societies, chose from among themselves three senior brethren, who ordained others by

the imposition of their hands. Among these were some of the ablest and most influential men then in the connexion. Surely no man ever had a fairer, or more plausible opportunity than Mr. Asbury then had, to organize and to place himself at the head of the Methodist Church in America, independently of Mr. Wesley. Yet it was he who, with the late venerable Watters, Garrettson, and others, resolutely remained in connexion with Mr. Wesley; and rested not till by his indefatigable labors the whole of the seceding body were brought back, to await and to abide by Mr. Wesley's advice. And this is the same man, who, after his death, is now charged with the vilest dissimulation and hypocrisy, and with violating the obligations both of "honor" and of "truth," for the sake of organizing a church, separate from and independent of Mr. Wesley, with himself at its head, in conjunction with another!

Dr. Coke was appointed and set apart by Mr. Wesley, aided by other presbyters, as a general superintendent of the American Methodists. In that character he was *unanimously received* by the American conference, and with their consent was to exercise episcopal powers among them, and to act as a bishop, though called a superintendent.

Mr. Asbury was unanimously chosen by the same conference, to be a general superintendent conjointly with Dr. Coke. He was first ordained deacon and elder, and then superintendent, agreeably to the unanimous voice of the conference, by Dr. Coke, a presbyter of the church of England, and Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, who had been previously ordained presbyters by Mr. Wesley. Dr. Coke, and Mr. Creighton, presbyters of the Church of England: with the assistance of Mr. Otterbine, a presbyter of the German Reformed Church.

The intention of the conference was, that Mr. Asbury also should exercise episcopal powers, and act as a bishop, though to be called a superintendent: and the church was

then, and thenceforth, called the Methodist Episcopal Church.

But if there be any law, divine or human, prohibiting or proscribing such an episcopacy, let it be produced. Let the edict itself be shown, and let not any man think us impertinent if in demanding the production of it, we require that the terms of the edict be very express and positive.

If this matter be pressed still farther, we then insist that the unanimous election and appointing of the first Methodist bishops was of itself sufficient, in the circumstances then existing, to constitute a valid episcopacy, according to the judgment of Archbishop Cranmer, and those divines who concurred with him, as stated by Stillingfleet. And let those who maintain that any other authority was indispensable to its legitimacy, produce their warrant. And let them remember beforehand that we are not to be governed by tradition.

If it be objected that those preceedings took place among the preachers only; we answer: This was undeniably in accordance with the original principle on which the Methodist societies had been gathered, and united by the preachers, who determined on what principles of discipline and of administration they would devote themselve to take charge of, to guide, and to serve, those who, *upon these principles*, *chose* to place themselves under their care, and especially upon what principles they could feel themselves at liberty to administer to them the ordinances.

If there were any law of God, or man, making this "illegitimate," unlawful, on the part of the preachers, let this edict also be produced. In the days of "the *fathers*" and of the *founders* of Methodism, at all events, both in Europe and in America, we hazard the assertion that these were principles recognized and acquiesced in by the Methodist *people* also. That it necessarily follows, however, from these premises, that any modification of this system, in all

after time, and in any change of circumstances, is absolutely precluded, is what we do not here mean to say. Nor is that a field into which our present subject requires us at all to enter.

But leaving out of view, for the present, any circumstances which might be collected of the divine approbation of the proceedings of the conference of 1784, from the great and signal blessings which followed upon the labors of the preachers, and the special prosperity of the work from that time, we will conclude this part of our subject with an argument, which, with some of our opponents perhaps, may have more weight.

We maintain, then, that the proceedings of that conference in organizing the "Methodist Episcopal Church," with general superintendents, vested with episcopal powers, and intended to act as bishops, were, in *fact*, if not in *form*, approved and sanctioned by the people, the Methodist people, of that day. And that the preachers set apart at that conference in their appropriate and respective characters, as deacons, elders, and superintendents or bishops, were freely and cordially received and greeted by the people, as such: and the sacraments gladly accepted, as they had long been urgently demanded, at their hands. Our proofs follow.

"The Methodists were pretty generally pleased at our becoming a church; and *heartily united together, in the plan which the conference had adopted.* And *from that time* religion greatly revived."—Lee's History, p. 107.

"25*th December*, 1784.—We became, instead of a religious society, a separate church, under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This change gave *great satisfaction through all our societies.*"—William Watters, Memoirs by Himself, p. 102.

"The conference met December, 1784. It was unanimously agreed that circumstances made it expedient for the Methodist societies in America to become a separate body

from the Church of England. They also resolved to take the title, and to be known in future, by the name of The Methodist Episcopal Church. They made the episcopal office elective.—Mr. Asbury was unanimously elected, and Dr. Coke was also unanimously received, jointly with him, to be the superintendents, or bishops, of the *Methodist Episcopal Church.* From that time the Methodist societies in the United States became an independent church, under the episcopal mode and form of government. *This step met with general approbation, both among the preachers and the members.* Perhaps we shall seldom find such *unanimity* of sentiment, upon any question of such magnitude."

Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, on Asbury, pp. 108, 109.

Of those who were members of the church at that period, very few are now living. And of such as are, these are not they who now complain of that act. That those who have voluntarily united themselves to this church since, knowing it to be thus constituted;—and some perhaps who have left other churches to join it;—or boys of yesterday, who but a few days ago solicited admission into it, thus organized;—that these should now represent the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church as a tyrannical *usurpation* over *them*, is an abuse of language so gross, that we marvel how men of common intellect or conscience can allow themselves in it.

The following is a copy of a letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Asbury, transcribed from the original. Its contents are in all respects highly interesting. But it is introduced here to show, that though written so recently after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at a period when Mr. Wesley could not but have known that event, it does not contain one syllable of censure, or of disapprobation. It is dated

"*Bristol, September* 30, 1785.

"My dear Brother,—It gives me pleasure to hear that God prospers your labors, even in the barren soil of South Carolina. Near fifty years ago, I preached in the church at Charleston; and in a few other places; and deep attention sat on every face. But I am afraid few received any lasting impressions.

"At the next conference it will be worth your while to consider deeply whether any preacher should stay in one place three years together. I startle at this. It is a vehement alteration in the Methodist discipline. We have no such custom in England, Scotland, or Ireland.

"I myself may perhaps have as much variety of matter, as many of our preachers. Yet I am well assured, were I to preach three years together in one place, both the people and myself would grow as dead as stones. Indeed this is quite contrary to the whole economy of Methodism: God has always wrought among us by a constant change of preachers.

"Newly awakened people should, if it were possible, be plentifully supplied with books. Hereby the awakening is both continued and increased.

"In two or three days I expect to be in London. I will then talk with Mr. Atlay on the head. Be all in earnest for God. I am, your affectionate friend and brother,

"J. Wesley."

The following letter shews in what sense we consider the *Methodist Episcopal Church*, the first Church organized in this country.

From the Christ'n Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald.

Messrs. Editors:—I am glad of an opportunity to explain what I meant in my letter of the 14th inst., when I

said that it "is a fact which ought to be remembered, that the Methodist Episcopal Church was the first church organized in this country," although it does not appear to me to be so ambiguous as your correspondent's letter seems to intimate.

What is meant then is simply this:—The Methodist *Episcopal Church* was organized *as such* in *this* country, and it was organized in this country in the year 1784, one year after the acknowledgment of the independence of these United States.

Now if you will look at all the other churches, you will find that they had their *first* organization in some one of the countries of Europe, except that of the Protestant Episcopal Church, which was organized in *this country after* that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Presbyterians, the Baptists, and Dutch Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Church of England, were all organized, not in this country, but in Europe; and although they existed in this country before the revolution, and consequently before the Methodist Episcopal Church, they existed only as branches of the several denominations which had their origin and distinct organization in Europe.

But the Methodist Episcopal Church never had an existence any where but in this country, and it had its organization here *before* any other denomination which had its origin here. I hope now I am understood. I never meant to say, and I cannot see how your correspondent, or any one else, could have understood me to say, that there was no church in this country before the Methodist Episcopal Church. I only meant to say that no other church was first organized here before the Methodist Church.

I am sorry to learn that in so grave a council as that which your correspondent mentions, not one of them could tell what I meant. I am inclined to think, however, from what your correspondent says, that my meaning was not so

ambiguous as they were inattentive to what I had written; for he says, "they could not tell how we were the first church in this country." Now this I never said; but I did say we were "the first church *organized* in this country;" and I say the same yet, and that the Protestant Episcopal Church was the next. Let your correspondent read the history of the several denominations of Christians, and I hope he will be able to convince himself, and then some of those "aged men," to whom he refers, that my statement is correct.

I have given this explanation, not so much on account of the intrinsic importance of the subject—for I mentioned it at first more as an historical fact than otherwise—as to satisfy your readers that I have not made you speak an untruth, and that I meant no disrespect to others, nor no special eulogy on the Methodist Episcopal Church.

New York, Aug. 26, 1829. P——.

In 1785 we had three conferences. The fourteenth conference was held at Green Hills, in North Carolina, on the 20th of April. The fifteenth conference was held at Mr. Mason's, in Brunswick county, in Virginia, on the 1st day of May. The sixteenth conference was held in Baltimore, on the 1st day of June.

This was the first time that we had more than one regular conference in the same year. For a few years before this, we had two conferences in the same year, but they were considered only as one, first begun in one place, and adjourned to another. Now there were three, and no adjournment. I have therefore considered the conferences as but one in the year, and have numbered them accordingly; but from this time I shall consider the number of the conferences, as I find them in the minutes. This year and the two succeeding years, the minutes were called, "Minutes of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America."

The business of the three conferences was all arranged in the minutes as if it had all been done at one time and place. And for the first time we had the annual minutes printed. which practice we have followed ever since.

We admitted twenty-eight young preachers on trial. We had fifty-two circuits in all, and one hundred and two preachers. We added to the society three thousand and twelve members this year; including those in Nova-Scotia and in Antigua. The whole number of members was mentioned this year in the minutes, without telling us how many there were in each circuit.

The form of the minutes of conference was changed this year, and all the *Elders* who were directed to take the oversight of several circuits, were set to the right hand of the bracket, which inclosed all the circuits and preachers of which he was to take charge.

This may be considered as the beginning of the presiding elder's office; although it was not known by that name at that time; yet in the absence of a *Superintendent*, this *Elder* had the directing of all the preachers that were inclosed in the bracket against which his name was set.

As soon as the conference in Baltimore was over, Dr. Coke sailed for Europe.

There was a great revival of religion this year in most parts of the connection, both in the North and South. On the Eastern shore of Maryland, the work was great, and many souls were brought into the liberty of the children of God.

In 1786, we had three conferences. The seventeeth conference was held at Salisbury in North Carolina, on the 21st of February. The eighteenth conference was held in Virginia, at Laine's chapel, on the 10th day of April. The Nineteenth conference war held at Baltimore on the 8th day of May.

We admitted on trial twenty-three young preachers. Seven hundred and ninety-one members were added to the society this year.

We had fifty-six circuits this year, and one hundred and sixteen traveling prcachers, which was a good supply of laborers.

This year we sent preachers to Kentucky for the first time; *James Haw* and *Benjamin Ogden* went to that new settled country, and labored with great success, and were prospered in their endeavors to build up the Redeemer's kingdom. They collected a good many societies together in the course of that year; and many people in the Western country will have cause to bless God for the coming of those preachers into that part of the world.

At the conference at Laine's meeting in Virginia, there was a proposal made for preachers to go to Georgia, and if any one felt freedom to offer themselves as missionaries for that service, they were requested to speak: several persons offered, more than could be spared. It was concluded that two only should go, and Thomas Humphries, and John Major werc accepted. They went forth in the name of the Lord, and were made a blessing to many of the inhabitants of Georgia. They formed a circuit up and down the Savannah river, and round by Little river, and the town of Washington; and in the course of that year they collected together and joined into a society four hundred and fifty members. Mr. Major continued in Georgia about two years, and died in peace.

This was a prosperous year with our societies; many were added to us, and joined among us: and the work of the Lord revived in general where we labored, and in some places, souls wcre gathered in by scores. Many of the old christians took a fresh start, and the holy fire kindled, and spread from heart to heart.

In 1787, we had three conferences. The twentieth conference was held at Salisbury in North Carolina, on the 17th day of March. The twenty-first conference was held at Rough Creek church in Virginia, on the 19th day of April. The twenty-second conference was held at Baltimore on the 1st day of May.

We admitted on trial thirty-four young preachers; and added to the society seven thousand and eighty two members, according to the minutes, but strictly speaking, we had an increase of eight thousand five hundred and ninety-two members. In our minutes for the last year, we had taken in the members from Nova Scotia and Antigua; but this year we left them off and did not take them into the numbers; and they amounted to one thousand five hundred and ten. This year, for the first time, the numbers in society were taken in each state separately.

We had now sixty-five circuits in the United States, and one hundred and thirty-one traveling preachers.

At the Baltimore conference the preachers complained of Dr. Coke, because he had taken upon himself a right which they never gave him, of altering the time and place of holding our conferences, after it had been settled and fixed on at the previous conference. Another complaint was brought against him for writing improper letters to some of our preachers, such as were calculated to stir up strife and contention among them.

At that time the doctor saw that the preachers were pretty generally united against him: he acknowledged his faults, begged pardon, and promised not to meddle with our affairs again when he was out of the United States. He then gave in writing a certificate to the same purpose, which was as follows:

"The certificate of Dr. Coke to the Conference.

"I do solemnly engage by this instrument, that I never will, by virtue of my office, as superintendent of the Metho-

dist church, during my absence from the United States of America, exercise any government whatever in the said Methodist Church. And I do also engage, that I will exercise no privilege in the said church when present in the United States, except that of ordaining according to the regulations and law, already existing, or hereafter to be made in the said church, and that of presiding when present in conference, and lastly that of traveling at large. Given under my hand the second day of May, in the year 1787.

Witnesses, THOMAS COKE.

John Tunnil,

John Hagerty,

Nelson Reed.

The preachers then agreed to forgive what was past, provided this condition should be expressed in the minutes: which was thus done:

Q. "Who are the superintendents of our church for the United States?"

A. "Thomas Coke (when present in the states) and Francis Asbury."

At this conference it was agreed, that no married preacher should demand more money than the allowance for himself and his wife.

Mr. Wesley also directed that Richard Whatcoat should be ordained a joint superintendent with Mr. Asbury. When this business was brought before the conference, most of the preachers objected, and would not consent to it. The reasons against it were, 1. That he was not qualified to take the charge of the connection. 2. That they were apprehensive that if Mr. Whatcoat was ordained, Mr. Wesley would likely recall Mr. Asbury, and he would return to *England.*

Dr. Coke contended that we were obliged to receive Mr. Whatcoat, because we had said in the minutes taken at the Christmas conference, when we were first formed into a church in 1784, "During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley.

we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to church government, to obey his commands."

Many of the members of that conference argued that they were not at the conference when that engagement was entered into, and that they did not consider themselves bound by it. Other preachers, who had said they were "ready to obey his commands," said they did not feel ready *now* to obey his command. The preachers at last agreed to depart from that engagement, which some of the elder brethren had formerly entered into, and in the next printed minutes, that engagement was left out.

They had made the engagement of their own accord, and among themselves, and they believed they had a right to depart therefrom when they pleased, seeing it was not a contract made with Mr. Wesley, or any other person, but an agrement among themselves. It was farther argued, that Mr. Wesley, while in England, could not tell what man was qualified to govern us, as well as we could, who were present, and were to be governed. We believed also, that if Mr. Wesley was here himself, he would be of the same opinion with us.

We then wrote a long and loving letter to Mr. Wesley, and requested him to come over to America, and visit his spiritual children.

This step of receding from the above engagement, was afterwards considered by some disaffected persons, as improper. If there was any thing improper in the business, it was in entering into the engagement, and not in departing from it.

In the course of this year Mr. Asbury reprinted the general minutes; but in a different form from what they were before. The title of this pamphlet was as follows:

"A form of Discipline for the ministers, preachers, and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America;

considered and approved at a Conference held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, on Monday, the 27th day of December, 1784. In which the Reverend Thomas Coke, LL. D. and the Reverend Francis Asbury, presided. Arranged under proper heads, and methodized in a more acceptable and easy manner."

In this Discipline there were thirty one sections, and sixty three questions, with answers to them all.

The third question in the second section, and the answer, read thus:—

Q. Is there any other business to be done in conference?

A. The electing and ordaining of Bishops, Elders, and Deacons.

This was the first time that our Superintendents ever gave themselves the title of Bishops in the Minutes. They changed the title themselves, without the consent of the Conference; and at the next conference, they asked the preachers if the word *Bishop* might stand in the Minutes, seeing it was a Scripture name, and the meaning of the word *Bishop* was the same with that of *Superintendent.*

Some of the preachers opposed the alteration, and wished to retain the former title; but a majority of the preachers agreed to let the word *Bishop* remain; and in the annual minutes for the next year, the first question is "Who are the bishops of our church for the United States?"

In the third section of this form of Discipline, and in the sixth page, it is said, "We have constituted ourselves into an *Episcopal Church*, under the direction of *Bishops*, *Elders*, *Deacons* and *Preachers*, according to the form of ordination annexed to our prayer book, and the regulations laid down in this form of discipline. From that time the name of Bishop has been in common use among us, both in conversation and in writing.

The last section is as follows: "As it has been frequently recommended by the preachers and people, that such

books as are wanted, be printed in this country, we therefore propose—

1. That the advice of the Conference shall be desired concerning any valuable impression, and that their consent be obtained before any steps be taken for the printing thereof.

2. That the profits of the books, after all the necessary expenses are defrayed, shall be applied, according to the discretion of the conference, towards the college, the preachers' fund, the deficiencies of the preachers, the distant missions, or the debts on our churches."

From that time we began to print more of our own books in the United States than we had done before; and the principal part of the printing business was carried on in New York.

We had a remarkable revival of religion this year. The heavenly flame spread greatly in various directions. Such a time for the awakening and conversion of sinners was never seen before among the Methodists in America. The greatest revival was in the south part of Virginia, which began in July, and continued to prosper throughout the year.

There was a remarkable revival of religion in the town of Petersburg, and many of the inhabitants were savingly converted; and old Christians greatly revived. That town never witnessed, before or since, such wonderful displays of the presence and love of God in the salvation of immortal souls. Prayer meetings were frequently held, both in the town and country, and souls were frequently converted at those meetings, even when there was no preacher present; for the prayers and exhortations of the members were greatly owned of the Lord.

The most remarkable work of all was in Sussex and Brunswick circuits, where the meetings would frequently continue for five or six hours together, and sometimes all night.

At one quarterly meeting, held at Mabry's Chapel, in Brunswick circuit, on the 25th and 26th of July, the power of God was among the people in an extraordinary manner: some hundreds were awakened; and it was supposed that above one hundred souls were converted at that meeting, which continued for two days, i. e. on Thursday and Friday. Some thousands of people attended meeting at that place, on that occasion.

The next quarterly meeting was held at Jones's Chapel, in Sussex county, on Saturday and Sunday, the 27th and 28th of July. This meeting was favored with more of the divine presence than any other that had been known before. The sight of the mourners was enough to penetrate the most careless heart. The divine power was felt among the people before the preachers came together. Many of the young converts from the quarterly meeting which had been held two days before, at Mabry's, had come together, and uniting with other Christians in singing and praying, the heavenly fire had begun to kindle, and the flame of love and holy zeal was spreading among the people, which caused them to break out in loud praises to God. Some when they met would hang on each other, or embrace each other in their arms, and weep aloud, and praise the Lord with all their might. The sight of those who were thus overwhelmed with the love and presence of God, would cause sinners to weep and tremble before the Lord.

By the time the preachers came within half a mile of the chapel, they heard the people shouting and praising God. When they came up, they found numbers weeping, both in the chapel and in the open air. Some were on the ground crying for mercy, and others in extacies of joy.

The preachers went among the mourners and encouraged them, and prayed with them. The private Christians did the same. Some were lying and struggling as if they were in the agonies of death, others lay as if they were dead.

Hundreds of the believers were so overcome with the power of God, that they fell down, and lay helpless on the floor or the ground; and some of them continued in that helpless condition for a considerable time, and were happy in God beyond description. When they came to themselves, it was generally with loud praises to God, and with tears and expressions, enough to melt the hardest heart. The oldest saints had never before seen such a time of love, and such displays of the power of God.

The next day the Society met early, in order to receive the Lord's Supper.

While the society was collected in the house, some of the preachers went into the woods to preach, and while they were preaching, the power of the Lord was felt among the people in such a manner, that they roared and screamed so loud that the preacher could not be heard, and he was compelled to stop. Many scores of both white and black people fell to the earth; and some lay in the deepest distress until the evening. Many of the wealthy people, both men and women, were seen lying in the dust, sweating and rolling on the ground, in their fine broadcloths or silks, crying for mercy.

As night drew on, the mourners were collected together, and many of them were in the most awful distress, and uttered such doleful lamentations that it was frightful to behold them, and enough to affect the most stubborn hearted sinner. But many of these were filled with the peace and love of God in a moment, and rising up would clap their hands and praise God aloud. It was then as pleasing as it had before been awful to behold them.

Many of these people who were happily converted, left their houses and came to the meeting with great opposition to the work of God; but were struck down in an unexpected manner, and converted in a few hours. So mightily did the Lord work, that a great change was wrought in a little time.

The great revival of religion in 1776 which spread extensively through the south part of Virginia, exceeded any thing of the kind that had ever been known before in that part of the country. But the revival this year far exceeded it.

In 1788 we had seven conferences. The twenty third conference was held in *Charleston*, on the 12th of March.

The twenty fourth in *Georgia*, on the 9th of April.

The twenty fifth at *Holstein*, on the 13th of May

The twenty sixth in *Petersburg* in Virginia, on the 17th of June.*

The twenty seventh at Beeson Town, on the 22d of July

The twenty eighth at Baltimore, on the 9th of September.

The twenty ninth in Philadelphia, on the 25th of September.

At these conferences we took in nineteen new circuits. In Georgia we took in one. The circuit that was formerly called Augusta was divided, and the lower part was now called Richmond, and the upper part *Washington.*

In South Carolina we took in *Seleuda* and *Waxsaws* circuits. In North Carolina we took in one called *Anson:* and we took in two among the mountains, called *French Broad*, and *West New River.* In Virginia we took in below the mountains, *Buckingham*, *Gloucester* and *Rockingham.* In Maryland, we took in *Annapolis*, *Harford* and *Cecil.* In Pennsylvania, we took in *Bristol* and *Pittsburg.* In New-York state, we took in *Dutchess*, *Shoreham*, *New City*, *Cambridge*, and *Lake Champlain.*

Some of these circuits had been taken off from the old circuits, which had been enlarged till there was room for more preachers, and then by dividing them we made two circuits

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* This conference was appointed at Benjamin Crawley's, in Amelia county, but by some means he lost his reason, and the conference could not meet at his house, and were under the necessity of meeting in the town of Petersburg.

out of one. But the most of them were formed where there had been none before; and where there had been but little if any preaching by the Methodists till the present year.

We admitted on trial fifty two young preachers. We added 11,481 members to the society. By the following statement it may be seen in what part of the United States the work of God was most prosperous. The increase this year in the different States is as follows:

777 in the State of Georgia,
704 in South Carolina,
955 in North Carolina,
4761 in Virginia and Kentucky,
2475 in Maryland,
544 in Delaware and Pennsylvania,
404 in New Jersey, and
861 in New York State.

11,481

This year the circuits were for the first time numbered in the minutes, and there were eighty-five. We had one hundred and sixty-five traveling preachers, which was a good supply for the circuits. We had other invitations from different parts of the country to send them preachers to labor among them; but we were not able to answer all the demands of the people; yet we increased and enlarged our borders greatly.

When the minutes for this year were printed, the condition of Dr. Coke's being a bishop "when in the U. States," was left out, and the question was changed, and was entered thus:

Q. "*Who are the bishops of our church for the United States?*

A. "Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury."

From this conference in 1788, Mr. Freeborn Garrettson was appointed presiding elder for the district north of the

city of New York, including all the circuits from *New Rochelle* to *Lake Champlain*. His labors, and the labors of those preachers who traveled under his direction, were greatly prospered, and many souls were brought to the knowledge of God by their ministry.—Hundreds and thousands of people in the new circuits of that district, will have cause to be thankful for the gospel truths that were disseminated among them in the course of that year. Many were awakened, and many were converted: and old professors much revived.

During the time of the conference, we were highly favored of the Lord, and souls were awakened and converted. On Sunday the 14th of September, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Asbury preached in Mr. Otterbein's church; and the people were generally solemn and much affected; he then asked another preacher to pray and conclude: and whilst he was praying an awful power was felt among the people. Some of them cried out aloud. The preachers went among them, and encouraged the mourners to look to the Lord, and prayed with them; and in a little time there was such a noise among them, that many of the christian people were immeasurably frightened, and as there was no opportunity for them to escape at the door, many of them went out at the windows, hastening to their homes. The noise had alarmed hundreds of people who were not at the meeting, and they came running to see what was the matter, till the house was crowded, and surrounded with a wondering multitude. In a short time some of the mourners lost the use of their limbs, and lay helpless on the floor, or in the arms of their friends. It was not long before some of them were converted, and rose up with streaming eyes, giving glory to God that he had taken away their sins. This meeting continued about two hours and a half, after the sermon was ended; in which time about twenty persons professed to be converted. This day of the Lord's power will never be forgotten by many who were present.

In 1789 we had eleven conferences, which were as follows:

The thirtieth conference was held in Georgia on the 9th of March.

The thirty-first in Charleston, on the 17th of March.

The thirty-second at M'Knight's meeting house, on the Yadkin river, in North Carolina, on the 11th of April.

The thirty-third in Petersburg, on the 18th of April.

The thirty-fourth at Leesburg, on the 28th of April.

The thirty-fifth in Baltimore, on the 4th of May.

The thirty-sixth at Cokesburg, on the 9th of May.

The thirty-seventh at Chestertown, on the 13th of May.

The thirty-eighth at Philadelphia, on the 18th of May.

The thirty-ninth at Trenton, New Jersey, on the 23d of May.

The fortieth in New York, on the 28th of May.

Several of these conferences were within thirty or forty miles of each other; which was pretty generally disliked; but at that time the bishop had the right of appointing as many conferences as he thought proper, and at such times and places as he judged best; but since then, the general conference fixes the number of annual conferences to be held in each year, having appointed the bounds of each of them.

At these conferences we took in fourteen new circuits and stations. In South Carolina two, one was called *Bush River*, and the other *Little Pee Dee*. In North Carolina, one called *Pamlico*. In Virginia two, *Greensville* and *Bottetourt*. In Maryland, *Baltimore Town*, which was separated from the Baltimore circuit, and for the first time had a preacher stationed in the town. In Delaware, *Wilmington*, a station, and a new circuit, called *Milford*. In New Jersey, one circuit was divided, the new part was called *Burlington*. In New York state we had four new circuits, *Newburg*, *Columbia*, *Coeyman's Patent* and *Schenectady*. We had one new circuit in Connecticut, called *Stamford*, which was the

first that was ever formed in that state, or any of the New England states. It was my lot to go to that circuit alone, and to labor by myself. Another preacher was appointed to the circuit with me, but he failed and never came, and I had to labor and suffer alone amongst a strange people.

We admitted forty five young preachers on trial this year: we had ninety seven circuits, and added to the society 5911 members; which was a great increase.

As some persons had complained of our receding from a former engagement made by some of our preachers, that "during the life of Mr. Wesley in matters belonging to church government they would obey his commands," and as others had thought that we did not pay as much respect to Mr. Wesley as we ought; the bishops introduced a question in the annual minutes which was as follows:

Q. *Who are the persons that exercise the Episcopal office in the Methodist church in Europe and America?*

A. John Wesley, Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, by regular order and succession.

The next question was asked differently from what it had ever been in any of the former minutes, which stands thus:

Q. *Who have been elected by the unanimous suffrages of the general conference, to superintend the Methodist connection in America?*

A. Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury.

In the latter part of the minutes for this year, we had the following explanation of a certain rule, about which there had been some uneasiness among some of our local preachers, and private members.

"As a very few persons have in some respect, mistaken our meaning, in the 32d section of our form of discipline, on bringing to trial disorderly persons, &c.—we think it necessary to explain it.

"When a member of our society is to be tried for any offence, the officiating minister or preacher is to call toge-

er all the members, if the society be small, or a select number if it be large, to take knowledge and give advice, and bear witness to the justice of the whole process; that improper and private expulsions may be prevented for the future."

We had also this, N. B. "From this time forward no person shall be owned as a member of our church, without six months' trial."

This rule continues in force still, and all our members are considered on trial for six months; during which time, if they wish to leave us, they may do it without any form of trial, and if we are dissatisfied with their conduct, we may cast them off without calling them to trial.

In the course of this year religion was pretty lively and prosperous in our societies, and in some places it was very remarkable. In Baltimore town it exceeded any thing that had ever been known in that place. I will just mention a particular time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. At a quarterly meeting held in Baltimore on the 8th and 9th of August, 1789, and during the following week, the kingdom of Satan suffered great loss. The first day of the quarterly meeting was profitable to numbers: many cried and wept bitterly for mercy, and some souls were born of God. Sunday, the second day, was most awful and glorious. In the lovefeast at eight in the morning, the society enjoyed a little Pentecost, and dwelt as it were in the suburbs of Heaven. The presence of God was awfully felt, while the people one after another feelingly declared *what God had done for their souls.*

As this year was the beginning of Methodism in the New England states, and as the first circuit was now formed, it will be necessary to speak a little of that part of the work.

Jesse Lee began the new circuit at Norwalk, in Connecticut, on the 17th of June, 1789, which was the first Methodist sermon that was ever preached in that place. No house

could be procured to preach in; every person was afraid to give liberty. He then went into the street, and began to sing, and then prayed and preached, to a decent congregation. On the 21st of June, he preached for the first time in the city of New Haven, to as many people as could crowd into the court house.

This new circuit took in Norwalk, Fairfield, Stratford, Milford, New Haven, Derby, Newtown, Reading, Danbury, and Canaan; with several other places within the same bounds. Many people flocked to hear the word, and sometime they felt it. But men and women were so fond of disputation about peculiar sentiments, that they seldom left the place after preaching, without having some dispute with the preacher.

The first society that was formed in that circuit, was in Stratfield, on the 20th day of September, and there were only three women that joined; and they remained alone for some months before any one else united with them. The next class that was formed, was in Reading on the 28th day of December. There were only two, one man and one woman, that joined at first. It was some months after before any other person joined with them. At length the society increased, and religion revived. Aaron Sanford, the first man that joined, became a preacher; his brother also, and a lawyer, (Samuel S. Smith,) joined with them and became preachers; and then another of the society began to preach. Though they were few and feeble in the beginning, they at last became a flourishing society, and four preachers were raised up among themselves.

This circuit was first called Stamford, since then it is called Reading.

The first Methodist meeting house that was ever built in New England, was in this circuit, near the upper edge of Stratfield, and is now called *Lee's Chapel.*

On the 27th day of February, 1790, three preachers came to my help from Maryland, namely, Jacob Brush, an *elder*, George Roberts and Daniel Smith, young preachers. They met me at a quarterly meeting at a place called *Dantown*, on the state line between New York and Connecticut. Their presence was reviving to the brethren, and to me in particular. On Sunday, preaching was in a new unfinished dwelling house. In the time of preaching, the Lord visited the people in mercy; and a great cry was raised among them, such as was not common in that part of the world. The people were alarmed; some ran out of the house, others that were above in the loft, ran to the end of the house and jumped out on the gound. In the midst of all the confusion, the Christians were exceedingly happy.

At these conferences in 1789, a plan was laid for the holding a *Council*. The Bishops said, they had made it a matter of prayer, and they believed the present plan was the best that they could think of.

After some opposition had been made to the plan, and there had been some debating about it, a majority of the preachers agreed to the following plan; which was published in the annual minutes.

Q. "*Whereas the holding of general conferences on this extensive Continent would be attended with a variety of difficulties, and many inconveniences to the work of God; and whereas we judge it expedient that a council should be formed of chosen men out of the several districts as representatives of the whole connection, to meet at stated times; in what manner is this council to be formed, what shall be its powers, and what further regulation shall be made concerning it?*"

A. 1st. "Our bishops and presiding elders shall be the members of this council; provided, that the members who form the council be never fewer than nine. And if any unavoidable circumstance prevent the attendance of a presid-

ing elder at the council, he shall have authority to send another elder out of his own district to represent him; but the elder so sent by the absenting presiding elder, shall have no seat in the council without the approbation of the bishop or bishops, and presiding elders present. And if, after the abovementioned provisions are complied with, any unavoidable circumstance, or any contingencies reduce the number to less than nine, the bishop shall immediately summon such elders as do not preside, to complete the number.

2dly. "These shall have authority to mature every thing they shall judge expedient. 1. To preserve the general union: 2. To render and preserve the external form of worship similar in all our societies through the continent: 3. To preserve the essentials of the Methodist doctrines and discipline pure and uncorrupted: 4. To correct all abuses and disorders: And lastly, they are authorized to mature every thing they may see necessary for the good of the church, and for the promoting and improving our colleges and plan of education.

3dly. "Provided nevertheless, that nothing shall be received as the resolution of the Council, unless it be assented to unanimously by the Council; and nothing so assented to by the Council, shall be binding in any district, till it has been agreed upon by a majority of the Conference which is held for that district.

4thly. "The bishops shall have authority to summon the Council to meet at such times and places as they shall judge expedient.

5thly. "The first Council shall be held at *Cokesbury*, on the first day of next December."

This plan of having a Council was entirely new, and exceedingly dangerous. A majority of the preachers voted in favor of it, but they were soon sensible that the plan would not answer the purpose for which it was intended. The Council was to be composed of the bishops, and the pre-

siding elders: the presiding elders were appointed, changed, and put out of office by the bishop, and just when he pleased; of course, the whole of the Council were to consist of the bishops, and a few other men of their own choice or appointing.

We have sufficient reason to believe that the establishment of the Council was very injurious to the Methodist connection. The plan produced such difficulties in the minds of the preachers and the people, and brought on such opposition, that it was hard to reconcile them one to another. Nothing would or could give satisfaction to the preachers but the calling together all the traveling preachers in a general conference; to which after some time the bishop consented.

In 1790 we had fourteen conferences, at the following times and places:

The forty-first conference was held in Charleston, on the 14th of February.

The forty-second in Georgia, on the 3d of March.

The forty-third in Kentucky, on the 26th of April.

The forty-fourth at Holstein, on the 17th of May.

The forty-fifth in North Carolina, on the 24th of May.

The forty-sixth at Lane's Chapel, on the 14th of June.

The forty-seventh at Union Town, on the 29th of July.

The forty-eighth at Leesburg, on the 26th of August.

The forty-ninth in Baltimore, on the 6th of September.

The fiftieth at Cokesbury, on the 11th of September.

The fifty-first at Duck Creek, on the 16th of September.

The fifty-second in Philadelphia, on the 22d of September.

The fifty-third in Burlington, on the 28th of September.

The fifty-fourth in New York, on the 4th of October.

At these conferences we took in twenty new circuits and stations. Three of them were in the south, *Savannah*, *Savannah Town*, and Catawba. There were six more in the west, namely. *Lexington*, *Limestone*, *Madison*, *Russel*,

Green and Lincoln. The others were, *Canterbury*, low down in North Carolina; and *Surry*, low down in Virginia, and *Stafford* in the north part of the state; and Canauway, in the upper part of the state. *South River* in Maryland, and *Bethel* in New Jersey, and *Randolph* high up the country. In Connecticut we took in three, *New Haven*, *Hartford* and *Litchfield.* And one in Massachusetts, called Boston.

We admitted on trial this year sixty eight young preachers, and added to the society 14356 members. There were more added to the society this year, than ever had been before in the course of one year. And with all, we had 116 circuits on the minutes this year.

The form of the minutes was now altered, and the first question was, "*Who are admitted on trial?*" This mode of beginning the minutes has ever since been pursued. The second question is, "*Who remain on trial?*" and thus proceed up in gradation to the Bishops. Formerly, the first question was, "Who are the Bishops?" and then proceed downwards to the lowest order.

Religion prospered this year in an uncommon manner. The great increase of members, however, was partly owing to the difference in the time of taking the account of them. Last year it was closed in May. This year in October, which extends the time to one year and five months. Had the numbers been taken in May, as they were the last year, the increase would not have been so large. But there was a most blessed work of God in different parts of the country. In New England we met with great encouragement, and some souls were savingly brought to the knowledge of the truth. On the 19th of May we joined the first class in Stratford, composed of a few loving persons, who were much despised in town on the account of their religion, and their attachment to the Methodists.

In March, New Haven circuit was formed, which extended along the post road from Milford to Hartford. The first

sermon preached by the Methodists in the city of Hartford, was on the 9th of December, 1789, and on the 8th November, this year, a class was formed in that city; but after a while some of the members moved away, and all the others were scattered.

About the beginning of this spring, *Litchfield* circuit was formed, which took in the north-west part of Connecticut state. And in the latter part of the spring we formed *Hartford* circuit, which took in both sides of Connecticut river. The first time the Methodists preached in the neighboring towns in that circuit, were as follows: On the 2d day of April, 1790, in Tolland; the 3d day in East-Windsor; on the 7th in Windsor; on the 9th in Suffield; on the 11th in Granby; on the 22d in Enfield; on the 29th in Wintonbury; and on the 3d of May in Wilbraham, in Massachusetts. The first sermon preached by the Methodists in the city of Middletown, was on the 7th day of December, 1789.

I have given this account of the time when the Methodists first began to preach in certain towns, that the people in those parts may know when they were first visited by us. No doubt it will be satisfactory to many, even of the rising generation.

I was appointed this year to the town of Boston, in order if possible to establish the Methodist doctrine and discipline, and to raise up a people for the Lord. I took my station on the 14th day of November. In the course of the preceding summer, Mr. Freeborn Garrettson had visited that town, and preached. I made them a visit in July. On one occasion, I went out on the common, and standing on a table, began to sing, with only a few persons present. But having prayed, and begun to preach, the number increased, so that there were two or three thousand attentive hearers. The number was still greatly increased, the next Sabbath day, at the same place, at six o'clock in the afternoon.

This may be considered the beginning of Methodism in Boston, and in all those parts of the country. Methodist preaching was a strange thing in that part of the world. On the 12th day of July, the first Methodist sermon was preached in Salem; on the 15th in Newburyport: on the 16th, in Danvers; on the 17th, in Marblehead; on the 20th, in Charlestown; and on the 14th of December, in Lynn. In Boston it was hard to procure a place to preach in, and the word took but little hold on the minds of the hearers: but as soon as we began to preach in Lynn, the word had a powerful effect on the hearers, who flocked to hear by hundreds. It soon appeared that Lynn was the place that should be attended to, in preference to any other. On the 20th of February, 1791, the first Class was formed in Lynn, consisting of eight persons, and that day week, twenty one persons were joined with the former number, and some of them were truly engaged with the Lord, and much devoted to his service; and others were sincere seekers of salvation.

There were abundance of people in that town who were fond of hearing the Methodists, and wished to attend their meetings constantly; and on the 9th day of May, upwards of seventy men who paid tax came together, and took certificates, showing that they attended public worship with the Methodists, and paid to the support of their minister. This was done to keep them as far as possible from being compelled by law to pay to the support of their settled congregational ministers, whom they did not like.

The Society in Lynn then determined on building a Methodist meeting-house; which they began accordingly, on the 14th of June, raised on the 21st, and dedicated on the 26th, 1791. This was the first regular permanent society that was formed in the state of Massachusetts: and the first meeting-house that was ever built for the Methodists in the state. From that time religion continued to prosper in Lynn for many months without any declension.

In the course of 1791, there was a considerable awakening among the people in different places not far from Lynn. The Methodists preached the first time in Manchester on the 11th day of January, and on the 12th in Beverly, and in Cape Ann, or Gloucester, on the 15th of February; in Weston on the 9th day of September; in Natick on the 10th; and in Medham on the 13th of the same month. Before that time they had never had a Methodist preacher among them.

We preached a long time in Boston, before we formed a Society, but on the 13th day of July, 1792, we joined a few in society, and after a short time they began to increase in numbers. We met with uncommon difficulties here, from the beginning, for the want of a convenient house to preach in. We began in private houses, and could seldom keep possession of them long. At last we obtained liberty to hold meetings in a school-house; but that too was soon denied us. We then rented a chamber in the north end of the town, where we continued to meet a considerable time regularly. The Society then undertook to get them a meeting house, but being poor, and but few in number, they could do but little. We begged money for them in Baltimore, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in Delaware state, in Philadelphia, and in New York, and by these exertions we were able to proceed, and began the building. On the 28th day of August, 1795, the *Corner Stone* was laid of the first Methodist meeting house in Boston, which was fixed at the north-end, and was built of wood 46 feet by 36, with galleries in front, and on both sides of the house.

In 1791 we had thirteen conferences.

We took in ten new circuits this year; one in South Carolina, called *Edisto Island*, and another which extended into a part of North Carolina, called *Union*. The others were *Queen Anns*, on the Eastern shore of Maryland, *Northumberland*, in Pennsylvania, *Otsego* and *Saratoga*, in New

York, Stockbridge in Massachusetts; the station called Boston, was changed to *Lynn* in the minutes, and another circuit formed called *Kingston.*

We admitted upwards of fifty young preachers on trial, and had an addition to the society of 6257 members; we also had one hundred and twenty-nine circuits this year.

We had a pleasing revival of religion in many places during this year; and a door was opened for the spreading of Methodism in the New England states; where many people were inviting us, and sending for us to come and preach among them. Some of them also cast in their lots with us, and joined our society. Notwithstanding there was great opposition to the Methodists in that part of the world, they continued to increase, and were more respected than they had formerly been.

The people had always been used to hear two sermons preached every Sabbath day, so that it was hard for them to be reconciled to our preaching in some places only on a week day. The common cry was, "If you would take a parish and settle among us, we should be glad to have you, and we would then hear you, and pay you well." However, we formed societies in several places, and they increased and prospered, and souls were converted to God.

In 1792, we had eighteen conferences, according to the account published in the annual minutes. But the line of the conferences was now changed, and they were begun in *Virginia*, and went forward to the south, and then turned and ended in the north. The two first conferences were held in the latter part of the preceding year: of course some things which were transacted at the conferences held in December last, will be considered as done this year; because they are published in the minutes of the present year.

At these conferences we took in eleven new circuits, which are as follows:

In North Carolina two, *Scopealong* and *Trent.* And one in the south called *Highco.* In Georgia two, *Oconee* and *Elbert.* Two in New York, *Staten Island* and *Tioga.* One in Massachusetts, called *Needham;* one in Rhode Island, called *Providence;* and two in Canada, *Cataraqua* and *Oswegochee.*

We admitted on trial upwards of fifty young preachers; and added to the society 2314 members this year.

At this time, 1792, we had about one hundred members in society, in the States of Connecticut and Massachusetts; the only States in New England where we had any societies formed. But we now for the first time formed a circuit in the State of Rhode Island.

On the first day of November, 1792, the first regular general conference began in Baltimore.

At that general conference we revised the form of discipline, and made several alterations. The proceedings of that conference were not published in separate minutes, but the alterations were entered at their proper places, and published in the next edition of the form of discipline, which was the eighth edition.

Notwithstanding we had some close debates, and some distressing hours during that conference; and with all, some of our preachers were so offended as to leave the conference before the business was half finished;* yet it was a comfortable time to most of us, and we were highly favored of the Lord with his presence and love in the last of our sitting. Our hearts were closely united together, and we parted in great union, love and fellowship.

The proceedings of this general conference gave great satisfaction to our preachers and people; and the divisive spirit which had been prevailing in different parts of our

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* J. O. Kelly and others.

connection, was considerably checked. And nothing that was done gave more satisfaction, than the plan that was laid for having another general conference at the expiration of four years from that time; to which, all the preachers in full connection, were at liberty to come.

In 1793, we had nineteen conferences; four of which were held in the latter part of the preceding year, after the close of the general conference.

At the conferences held this year, (1793) we took in 12 new circuits, which were as follows: *Swanino* (which lay among the mountains) and *Haw River*, in North Carolina. *Kingston*, in the Western country: and *Washington*, to the west of Baltimore. *Freehold*, in New Jersey. *Herkimer* and *Seneca-Lake*, in the north parts of New York state: *Tolland* and *New London*, in Connecticut: Providence, in Rhode Island, was now called Warren. *Province of Maine*, called so after the name of the country, as no circuit had been formed in that part of New England. *Prince George's*, in Maryland; and *Savannah*, in Georgia.

Four preachers were entered, withdrawn from our connection; two of them, John O'Kelly, and Rice Haggard, continued to travel and preach through the country where they pleased, and they spared no pains in trying to draw off disciples after them. The other two, John Robinson and John Allen, settled themselves. Mr. Allen went into the practice of physic, and soon gave up preaching. He has been living since that time in the district of Maine.

There was a good revival of religion this year, in many of the new circuits, and the way was open for us to extend our borders in various directions; but we had a great declension in many of the old circuits. When the numbers in society were taken, we found that we had gained fewer than we had for seven years before.

New London circuit in Connecticut was formed in the beginning of this year, and the preacher continued to travel in

it from that time until the conference; at which time it was taken on the minutes. It then had fifty members. There had been preaching by the Methodists in most of the places that were now taken into this circuit, some time before the circuit was formed. The first sermon preached by the Methodists in the city of New London, was on the 2d day of September, 1789, which was upwards of three years before the circuit was formed. The first Methodist sermon that was preached in Windham, was on the 24th of June, and the first in the city of Norwich on the 25th of June, 1790.

It was upwards of five years from the time of the society's being formed in New London, until they built a meeting house to assemble in. Their meeting house was raised on the 20th day of July, 1798, and the dedication sermon was preached in it two days after the frame was raised, i. e. on Sunday the 22d of July, in the afternoon.

Warren circuit in Rhode Island, took in Bristol, Newport, Providence, Cranston, and several places in Massachusetts. It will no doubt be satisfactory to many of the inhabitants of Rhode Island, to know the time when the Methodists first came to that State. The first Methodist sermon was preached in Charlestown, Rhode Island, on the 3d day of September, 1789. The first in Newport was on the 30th of June, 1790. The first in Bristol was on the 2d of July: and the first in Providence was on the 4th of July, 1790. The first Methodist sermon preached in Cranston, was on the 11th day of November, 1791.

The first meeting house that was built for the Methodists in the State of Rhode Island, was that in Warren, which was dedicated, or first preached in, on the 24th day of Sept. 1794.

When we went to Province-Town to preach, we were gladly received by those who had lately embraced religion; and a great many of the other people attended our ministry, and were highly gratified with our manner of preaching.

In a short time we formed a society; and from that time the work began to increase much more than it had done before, and several souls were converted to God. This society was formed in the beginning of the summer 1795. After the society began to increase considerably, the brethren concluded to build themselves a meeting-house. The plan was laid, and the timber procured at a distance, and brought to town by water, and then hauled together in order to begin to frame the house. By this time persecution began to spread through the town, and many things were said against the building. And on the 25th of August, 1795, in the night time, the mob collected privately, and took the greater part of the timber, and carrying it over a large hill into a bottom, they cut it to pieces and built a large pen of it. Then getting a sailor's old hat, coat, and trowsers, and stuffing them so as to make them resemble a man, they fastened the image on the top of the pen, and tarred and feathered it.

This conduct was the most violent opposition that we had met with in that part of New England. But the brethren were not discouraged by this opposition. They laid their plan, and procured more timber, and built themselves a comfortable meeting house in the latter part of that same year: and it was ready for use by the next January.

In 1794 we had fourteen Conferences; three of which were held in the latter part of the preceding year.

These Conferences, from the beginning to the close of them, included upwards of eleven months and a half; in which time we took in several new circuits, which were as follows: *Federal*, in Maryland; *Carlisle*, in Pennsylvania; *Leesburg* and *Pendleton*, in Virginia; *Black-Swamp*, in South Carolina; *New-Hampshire*, in the state of New-Hampshire; *Marblehead*, *Orange*, and *Fitchburg*, in Massachusetts; and *Vermont*, in the state of Vermont. The circuit in Upper Canada was divided—one part was called Upper Circuit, and the other Lower Circuit.

We admitted on trial forty young preachers. But we lost in the number of our members 2135. This was the first time that our number had decreased for fourteen years.

The first meeting house which was built in the Province of Maine for the Methodists, was that in Readfield, which was begun in the fall of the year 1794, and was nearly covered in by the first of December. The second was that in Monmouth, which was begun in 1795.

The first time that we ever administered the Lord's Supper in that part of the country, was in Readfield, on the 14th day of December, 1794. The second time was in Monmouth, on the 25th day of the same month, which was on Christmas-day.

The meeting house in Readfield was dedicated on the 21st day of June, 1795. But the meeting house in Monmouth was not dedicated until the last day of May, 1796.

The first quarterly meeting that was ever held in the Province of Maine, was in Monmouth, which began on the 23d day of June, 1795.

The first conference that was ever held in the Province of Maine, was in Readfield, which began on the 29th day of August, 1798. We had ten traveling preachers at it, and about 200 communicants. It was not five years from the time the people there, first heard a Methodist; yet after they began to unite with us, they flourished and increased so fast, that now we could collect at one meeting about 200 members of our society. When we made a return of the number in society in 1795, which was about eight months from the time we joined the first members together, we had 268 in society.

We will now take a view of Methodism in New Hampshire state; which was the last state in the union, where we formed societies. The first circuit was called Chesterfield, which lay in the south-west corner of the state, near to Connecticut river, which divides New-Hampshire from Vermont. The

first society formed in the state was in Chesterfield, some time in the latter part of the year 1795. At which time, there were but a few that felt freedom to unite with us; yet after some time a few more cast in their lots; and other societies were soon formed in other places. The circuit was not entered on the annual minutes until the year 1796.

Some time after this there was a circuit formed higher up the state called Landaff; and in that place religion prospered very much, and many souls were soon brought into the liberty of God's children; and the work of the Lord spread greatly among the people.

The first circuit that we formed in the state of Vermont, was called Virshire. This circuit was taken on the minutes in 1796. We had been preaching in that town, and in many of the neighboring towns some time before that, but had no societies formed. We had some societies in the state which belonged to circuits in other states. But Virshire was the first circuit that was formed within the state; and it reached from the towns near Connecticut river to Mountpelier, to the north of Onion river, which runs into Lake Champlain. Many of the places where we preached in that circuit, were quite new settlements: the houses were very small, and but scattering through the country. The preachers had to encounter many difficulties, and to endure many hardships But one thing which made up for all the difficulties was this, the people were fond of attending meeting by day or night, and were very kind to the preachers. And the best of all was, sinners were soon awakened, and in a little time some of them became the happy subjects of the favor of God, and were zealously engaged in trying to help forward the work of the Lord as far as they could. Since then we have prospered considerably in this new part of the country

I have given a brief account in the preceding pages of this chapter, of the beginning and spread of Methodism in the Province of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont states;

but it is only a sketch. To give a full account of all the revivals of religion, of all the societies that were formed, of all the young preachers that were raised up, and of all the oppositions and persecutions we met with, would fill a volume. This being intended for a short history, I have given the reader an account of the most material things that took place in the beginning. But no one can form a proper idea of what the Lord has wrought in those parts, except they have been eye and ear witnesses of it. One thing is evident, and cannot be denied, that hundreds of people who were formerly notoriously wicked, are now civil, sober, and religious. I have thought proper, for the satisfaction of the people who live in that country, to mention the time when we first preached in particular towns, and when we first formed societies.

In 1795, we had only seven conferences; two of which were held in the latter part of the preceding year.

We took in 45 young preachers upon trial, which was very encouraging to us. In the latter part of this year, 1795, we formed the first society in New Hampshire state, and then for the first time, although we had labored about twenty six years—we could say that we had societies in all the United States.

In 1796, we had eight conferences; seven annual conferences, and a general conference. Two of these conferences were held in the close of the preceding year.

This year we admitted on trial upwards of thirty young preachers; and lost out of the traveling connection forty; twenty-eight of them located; nine died; two withdrew, and one was expelled.

This year we took an account of the number of the members in our society in each state separately, which was as follows:

	Members.		Members.
Province of Maine,	357	Massachusetts,	821
New Hampshire,	68	Rhode Island,	220
Connecticut,	1050	North Carolina,	8713
New York,	4044	South Carolina,	3659
New Jersey,	2351	Georgia,	1171
Pennsylvania,	3011	Tennessee,	516
Delaware,	2228	Kentucky,	1750
Maryland,	12416	Upper Canada,	474
Virginia,	13779		
		In all,	56,664

Our general conference was held this year in Baltimore, which began on the 20th of October, 1796, at which we had 120 traveling preachers who were members of that conference. After we had finished the business of the conference, we had the minutes published before the preachers left town, that they might take them to their several circuits.

There were several alterations made at that time, in our form of discipline, and several new regulations were formed.

It was agreed that the annual conferences which had been called district conferences, should in future be called yearly conferences; and our whole connection was divided into six yearly conferences.

The first, was called the New England conference.

The second, the Philadelphia conference.

The third, the Baltimore conference.

The fourth, the Virginia conference.

The fifth, the South Carolina conference.

The sixth, the Western conference; and the bounds of each conference were fixed: but the bishop was allowed, if he saw proper, to have another conference in the Province of Maine. Before this regulation was established, the bishop had the power of appointing the number of conferences at his own discretion.

At that time it was thought proper to have another bishop elected and ordained, and the conference voted that it should

be done during the sitting of that conference. After the vote was taken, a difficulty arose about the manner of choosing, or electing a man to be ordained a bishop; and before the point was settled, Dr. Coke begged that the business might be laid over until the afternoon, which was done. When we met in the afternoon, the Dr. offered himself to us, if we saw cause to take him; and promised to serve us in the best manner he could, and to be entirely at the disposal of his American brethren, and to live or die among them. The conference at length agreed to the Doctor's proposal, and concluded that if the Doctor tarried with us, we could do with two bishops, without ordaining a third, and the former vote for choosing another bishop was dropped.—The Doctor then gave us the following instrument of writing:

"I offer myself to my American brethren, entirely to their service, all I am and have, with my talents and labors in every respect; without any mental reservation whatsoever, to labor among them, and to assist bishop Asbury: not to station the preachers at any time when he is present: but to exercise all the episcopal duties, when I hold a conference in his absence, and by his consent, and to visit the West Indies and France, when there is an opening, and I can be spared." [Signed,]

THOMAS COKE.

Conference Room, Baltimore, October 27, 1796.

On Sunday the fourth day of December, while the congregation was assembled in the afternoon for divine service, in our church in Light street, in the city of Baltimore, and the preacher was preaching to them, there was a cry of fire heard from without, which had broke out near the church: the flames soon spread to the church, and in a very short time the House of God was burnt down; and the Preacher's house, that stood near it, was much damaged. The Academy, or School-Room, was also laid in ashes. This

destruction of property by fire, was just twelve months to a day from the time that Cokesbury College was burned.

In 1797 we had seven conferences: There were but six appointed on the annual minutes, but it was thought best to take in the conference in Virginia, which was held in 1796, and that also which was held in this year, which would make seven in all, and by that means the conferences would be changed about, so as to begin them in future in the south, and finish them in the north. By the regulations made at the late General conference, we could not have more than seven conferences in one year, unless there were new circuits enough formed to compose a conference.

We had for three years together been declining in numbers; but this year we began again to increase, and we had an addition of 1999 members.

In 1798 we had seven conferences. As the plan had been laid in the preceding year, we now began the conferences in the south, that we might attend those that were appointed in the large towns in the spring of the year before the sickly season came on.

We added 1506 members to the society this year, which was a goodly increase. We took about 25 young preachers upon trial.

In 1790, we had only six conferences, and they were begun in the south.

At these conferences we took in about forty young preachers upon trial.

Our borders were greatly enlarged this year, and the way was opening for us to spread farther, and to send forth more laborers into the vineyard of the Lord. We had an addition to the society this year of 1182 members. Great peace and harmony prevailed throughout our connection, both among preachers and people, and the prospect of a great revival of religion was more pleasing than it had been at any one time for some years; and in some places there

was a good stir of religion, and many souls were brought into the liberty of the children of God.

This year Ezekiel Cooper was regularly appointed by the Bishop and the Philadelphia conference, to superintend the book concern, as editor and general book-steward, in the room of John Dickins deceased.

In 1800, we had eight conferences; however, one of them was a general conference.

We admitted upwards of forty young preachers on trial this year, which was a great help to us.

We added to the society this year 3543 members, which was very encouraging to those who labored and traveled night and day for the salvation of precious souls.

This year we had 156 traveling elders, and their names were printed in the annual minutes in regular rotation: the oldest traveling preacher was set down first, and the next oldest, as they were found on the minutes, was set down next, and so on, till the youngest elder was set down last. But those who had been part of their time located, were all entered at the bottom of the list, with this † mark to each name, that they may be known from the rest of the elders.

There was an alteration made in the sixth question and answer, in the annual minutes this year, and it was printed thus:

Q. 6. "*Who are the Bishops?*

A. "Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury, Richard Whatcoat."

This year we held our third regular general conference, which began in Baltimore on the sixth day of May, and continued until the twentieth. We had 119 preachers present who were regular members of that conference.

Some time previous to the meeting of the preachers in that conference, Mr. Asbury had said that when they met he would resign his office as superintendent of the Methodist connection, and would take his seat in the conference on a level with the elders. He wrote to several of the

preachers in different parts of the connection, and informed them of his intention; and engaged other preachers to write to their brethren in the ministry, and to inform them of his intention to resign. Withal, he wrote his resignation with an intention to deliver it in to the conference as soon as they met, and to have it read in their first meeting. He said, he was weak and feeble both in body and mind, that he was not able to go through the fatigues of his office.

When the conference met and proceeded to business, they first took up Mr. Asbury's case thus, Q. "Whereas Mr. Asbury has signified his intention of resigning his official station in our church, on account of his weakness of body, what is the sense of the conference on this occasion?

A. 1. "The general conference consider themselves under many and great obligations to Mr. Asbury for the many and great services which he has rendered to this connection.

2. "This conference do earnestly entreat Mr. Asbury for a continuation of his services as one of the general superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as far as his strength will permit."

Mr. Asbury told the conference, that he was still feeble both in body and mind, but was much better than he had been for some time before; and notwithstanding he had been inclined to resign his office, he now felt willing to do any thing he could to serve the connection, and that the conference might require of him.

Dr. Coke then obtained liberty to return to Europe again upon the condition that he should return to America, as soon as his business would allow; or, at farthest, by the next general conference.

We then had the following questions and answers:—

Q. "Whereas it appears, that Mr. Asbury's weakness of body will not admit of his traveling as extensively through the United States as the situation of the connection requires, what further help will this conference afford him?

A. "Another bishop shall be elected and consecrated.

Q. "In what manner shall the votes for the election of a bishop be taken?

A. "By ballot."

There was then a lengthy debate respecting the powers the new bishop should possess. Some were of the opinion that he ought to act under the direction of the old bishop, and be governed by him; but it was finally determined that they should be on an equal footing, and be joint superintendents.

The conference then proceeded to vote for a bishop. On the first balloting, no one had a majority. They balloted a second time, and the tellers reported that there was a tie between Richard Whatcoat and Jesse Lee. They proceeded to a third ballot, when Richard Whatcoat was declared to be duly elected by a majority of four votes.

On the 18th of May, 1800, Richard Whatcoat was ordained a bishop, by the laying on of hands, by Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and some of the Elders.

In was now determined that there should be seven annual conferences, and that of New England should be divided. That one should be called the *New England Conference*, and the other the *New York Conference:* and the bounds for each were fixed. It was then said, "Let each annual conference pay its proportionable part towards the allowances of the bishops." This was the first time that a regular plan was laid for the support of the bishops; formerly the bishop received the greater part of his support from private friends; and the deficiency was generally made up by particular societies.

We also formed a new rule respecting the next general conference, which was in the words following: "No preacher shall have a right to sit as a member in the next general conference, unless he is in full connection, and has been a traveling preacher four years." Previous to this time all our preachers who had been admitted into full connection,

were entitled to a seat in the general conference, although they might have traveled only two years.

We appointed the next general conference to be in the city of Baltimore, on the sixth day of May, 1804.

While the general conference was sitting in Baltimore, the preachers were very useful in the beginning of a glorious revival of religion in that place. And at the close, the preachers parted in great peace and love, and set out for their stations in different parts of the United States.

About the same time there was a most remarkable revival of religion in the western country, both in Tennessee and Kentucky states; such a work as had never been seen in that part of the world, since the first settling of the country.

I suppose the Methodist connection hardly ever knew such a time of a general revival of religion through the whole of their circuits, as they had about the latter part of the year 1800.

In 1801 we had seven conferences.

We took on trial upwards of fifty young preachers.

During this year, 1801, the work of God spread and revived greatly in most parts of our connection; but our societies increased more in Maryland and Delaware states, than in any of the other states. However, the work was pretty general; and by letters written from different parts of the United States, we were assured the work continued to prosper throughout the year.

In the year 1786, the Methodists' traveling connection, extended their aid to their societies in Kentucky; and sent out two preachers, both of whom deserted them in Mr. James O'Kelly's schism; which took place shortly after, and took off from the connection a few others; they both however went to nothing: one died long since, the other still lives a poor backslider! These preachers' places were soon supplied by others whose names will be long gratefully remembered. The numbers of preachers increased from time to time; and from this small unpropi-

tious beginning, have grown, first, Western conference, since erected into "the Ohio," "the Tennessee," "the Missouri," "and the Mississippi," Conferences. These now embrace, exclusively of traveling preachers, 69,859 members.

For nearly twenty years, from the first commencement of the settlement of the country, there does not appear to have been any considerable movement as it respects general reformation in any of the churches. About the commencement of the present century, a general revival amongst the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists took place. With the Baptists, as a church, the revival appeared to be confined pretty much to their own people, and in particular congregations. With the exception of one or two congregations, perhaps more, they were of the old order of *regular Calvinistic Baptists*. As such they did not continue long embodied; but split into various divisions, and sub-divisions. The cause of all these divisions may be very easily traced to their source. The revival amongst the Presbyterians and Methodists, commenced in the year 1799, and in 1800, in the lower part of Kentucky, under two preachers, brothers, one of each denomination, who held their meetings together in Logan and Christian Counties, on the waters of Gasper river, and perhaps other places. Having thus united in the work, they found themselves straitened in their houses, on account of the increase of their congregations. In the summer they took to the woods. The people in order to accommodate themselves, carried provision for their families and beasts, in their wagons; erected tents, and continued some days in the exercises of singing, prayer and preaching! Thus commenced what has since received the appellation of "Camp Meetings;"* a revival of the "Feasts of Tabernacles." It is one among the great means of grace with which the modern Christian Church is

* See plate 15, frontispiece.

blessed: It is every way calculated to spread the blessed word, and no marvel that the devil should make such sore thrusts at the institution on the commencement, but his weapons hitherto turned against them, having failed. These meetings are a peculiar blessing to the people situated as those in the West are: at them the minds of the people for days are taken off their various temporal concerns, and their hearts become the temples of the great God! It was not for these favored people in the remote part of the state to have their banquet altogether alone. The work continued to revive and spread, and the novelty of the meetings excited the curiosity of thousands.

The Rev. William M'Kendree, (now Bishop) Presiding Elder of the district, was in the lower part of the state about the commencement of the revival, and became much engaged in it. In the latter part of 1800, or early in 1801, (if my recollection serves me) he came up to the center of the settlements of the state; and in many places, was the first to bear the tidings of these singular meetings, which had so recently commenced, and had so greatly attracted the attention of multitudes. I shall never forget the looks of the people, who had assembled in a congregation composed mostly of Methodists and Presbyterians, and their adherents, when the old gentleman, after the conclusion of a very pathetic sermon having been much animated in the work, gave an interesting statement of the progress of it from what he had seen, and of the meetings before described. Whilst he spoke, the very sensation of his soul glowed in his countenance. His description of them was such as would be vain for me to attempt. He described them in their native simplicity: He told of the happy conversion of hundreds; how the people continued in their exercises of singing, praying, and preaching on the ground, surrounded by wagons and tents, for days and nights together. That many were so affected, that they fell to the ground

like men slain in battle. The piercing cries of the penitents, and rapture of the healed, appeared to be brought to our view; and what was equally encouraging to the faithful, that the work instead of declining, was progressing to the interior. After this description given by him, it was unnecessary to exhort the faithful to look for the like among themselves. Their hearts had already began to beat in unison with his; whilst sinners were generally melted into tears. As for my own feelings, though a stranger to religion at that time, they will never be forgotten. I felt, and I wept!

These meetings began, as the season permitted, to make their gradual approach towards the center of the state. It was truly wonderful to see what an effect their approach made upon the minds of the people. Here in the wilderness were thousands and tens of thousands, of almost every nation: Here were thousands hungry for the bread of life: and thousands thirsting for the waters of salvation! A general move was visible in the congregations, previously to the arrival of these meetings. The devout Christians appeared to be filled with hope. Their hearts were greatly enlarged to pray for the prosperity of Zion. The formalists were troubled with very uneasy sensations: backsliders became terrified: the wicked in general were either greatly alarmed, or struck with solemn awe, whilst curiosity was general, and raised to the highest degree to see into these strange things. Indeed, such was the commotion, that every circle of the community appeared to have their whole attention arrested. Many were the conjectures respecting these meetings.

Things, however, did not continue long to keep the attention of the people in suspense. The camp-meetings began to approach nearer and nearer to the center; when one meeting after another was soon appointed in succession, and

the number that attended them is almost incredible to tell. When collected on the ground, and whilst the meetings continued, such crowds would be passing and repassing, that the roads, paths and woods appeared to be literally strewed with people! Whole settlements and neighborhoods would appear to be vacated, and such was the draught from them, that it was only here and there that a solitary house would contain an aged house-keeper; young and old very generally pressing through every difficulty to see the Camp-Meeting! The Presbyterians and Methodists now united in them; hence it was, that they took the name of GENERAL CAMP-MEETINGS. On the 30th of January, 1801, one writes, giving an account of the work as it first appeared: "The work is still increasing in Cumberland. It has overspread the whole country. It is in Nashville, Barren, Muddy, Gasper, Red Banks, Knoxville, &c. J. M. C. has been there two months; he says it exceeds any thing he ever saw or heard of. Children and all seem to be engaged; but children are the most active in the work. When they speak, it appears that the Lord sends his spirit to accompany it with power to the hearts of sinners.—They all seem to be exercised in an extraordinary way; lie as though they were dead for some time, without pulse or breath; some a longer, some a shorter time. Some rise with joy triumphant; others crying for mercy. As soon as they obtain comfort, they cry to sinners, exhorting them to come to the Lord."

These *General Camp-Meetings*, not only came up to this description, but far exceeded it. Early this spring, a work broke out in Madison county. On the 22d day of May, this year, a camp-meeting was held on Cabin creek. The next general camp-meeting was held at Concord, in Bourbon county, the last Monday in May, or beginning of June; and continued five days and four nights. The next general meeting was at Point-Pleasant, (Ken.) The next at Indian creek.

Harrison county, began 24th July, and continued about five days and nights. The GREAT GENERAL CAMP-MEETING, held at CANERIDGE, seven miles from Paris, (Bourbon county,) began on the 6th day of August, and continued a week. This meeting will be particularly noticed hereafter. Independent of these *general meetings*, the Methodists had many great and glorious meetings unconnected with their Presbyterian brethren. Indeed these meetings in each denomination were soon spread over the country; and this year extended over the Ohio river, into the N. W. Territory, now state of Ohio.

Having been raised in this state, the writer, then a youth, has many circumstances fresh upon his mind, with regard to this great work; but in aid of this narrative he is disposed to take along whatever he finds that may be correctly given by others. "At first appearance (says one) these meetings exhibited nothing to the spectator, unacquainted with them, but a scene of confusion, such as scarce could be put into human language. They were generally opened with a sermon, at the close of which there would be an universal outcry; some bursting forth into loud ejaculations of prayer, or thanksgiving for the truth. Others breaking out in emphatical sentences of exhortation; others flying to their careless friends, with tears of compassion; beseeching them to turn to the Lord. Some struck with terror and hastening through the crowd to make their escape; or pulling away their relations.—Others trembling, weeping; crying out for the Lord Jesus to have mercy upon them; fainting and swooning away, till every appearance of life was gone; and the extremities of the body assumed the coldness of death.—Other surrounding them with melodious songs, or fervent prayers for their happy conversion; others, collecting into circles, round this varied scene, contending with arguments for and against the work. This scene frequently continued without intermission for days and nights together." At these

meetings many circumstances transpired well worth relating, and very interesting, but it would overleap our limits to narrate them; one at this time must suffice." At Indian Creek a boy from appearance about twelve years of age, retired from the stand in time of preaching, under a very extraordinary impression; and having mounted a log at some distance, and raising his voice in a very affecting manner; he attracted the main body of the people in a very few minutes. With tears streaming from his eyes, he cried aloud to the wicked, warning them of their danger, denouncing their certain doom if they persisted in their sins; expressing his love to their souls, and desire that they would turn to the Lord and be saved. He was held up by two men; and spoke for about an hour with that convincing eloquence, that could be inspired only from above. When his strength seemed quite exhausted, and language failed to describe the feelings of his soul, he raised his hand, and dropping his handkerchief, wet with sweat from his little face, cried out, "Thus Oh sinner, shall you drop into hell, unless you forsake your sins and turn to the Lord." At that moment some fell like those who are shot in battle, and the work spread in a manner which human language cannot describe.

The numbers attending the camp-meetings at this early period (1801,) on daily visits, whilst the meetings continued, and those attending them in their encampments, were immense.—The numbers varied, according to the population of the settlements, where the meetings were held, and other circumstances, from three to twenty thousand souls. At one of these meetings (Cabin Creek) the scene was awful beyond description! "few if any escaped without being affected; such as tried to run from it, were frequently struck on the way, or impelled by some alarming signal to return. No circumstance at this meeting appeared more striking than the great numbers that fell on the third night; and to prevent their being trodden under foot by the multitude, they

were collected together, and laid out in order, on two squares of the meeting-house, till a considerable part of the floor was covered. But the great meeting at *Caneridge* exceeded all. The number that fell at this meeting was reckoned at about three thousand, among whom were several presbyterian ministers, who, according to their own confession, had hitherto possessed only a speculative knowledge of religion. Here the formal professor, the deist and the intemperate, met one common lot, and confessed with equal candor that they were destitute of the true knowledge of God, and strangers to the religion of Jesus Christ." One of the most zealous and active Presbyterian ministers estimated the number collected on the ground at twenty thousand souls! At this meeting as well as at all others, wherever the work broke out, the Methodists appeared to be more active and more in their element than any other people. Indeed, when it first appeared in most of the congregations, other ministers were so alarmed, not knowing what to make of it, that they would have deserted it, and their meetings too, had they not been encouraged by the Methodists. But they soon joined, and moved forward cordially in the work. Having been thus inured and prepared, this great meeting brought on a general engagement. It was necessary, that such a concourse should be scattered over a considerable extent of ground; of course there were several congregations formed, in different parts of the encampment, for preaching and other religious exercises. In consequence of so great a collection of people, it frequently happened, that several preachers would be speaking at once, to congregations as before described, generally embracing some of each denomination. Nor were they at a loss for pulpits: stumps, logs, or lops of trees, served as temporary stands from which to dispense the word of life! At night, the whole scene was awfully sublime. The ranges of tents, the fires, reflecting light amidst the branches of the towering trees; the candles and lamps illu-

minating the encampment; hundreds moving to and fro, with lights or torches, like Gideon's army; the preaching, praying, singing and shouting, all heard at once, rushing from different parts of the ground, like the sound of many waters, was enough to swallow up all the powers of contemplation. Sinners falling, and shrieks and cries for mercy awakened in the mind a lively apprehension of that scene, when the awful sound will be heard, "arise ye dead, and come to Judgment!"

It is by no means presumable that this vast multitude of people were all induced to attend this meeting as worshippers; but it is a fact, that many who were led thither by curiosity, returned with very different feelings from those with which they went.—A gentleman and lady of some note in the gay and fashionable world, went to the meeting with mirth and jesting, highly diverting themselves at the expense (as hey thought) of those poor deluded beings who were falling, and perhaps rolling in the mud and dirt, screaming and crying for mercy; led on by curiosity, and perhaps as spectators, with an expectation of returning to give an account of the wonderful sights they had witnessed, and to laugh, ridicule, and make sport of it. With such sources of gratification, they were congratulating each other on their way to the meeting; and in the sequel, it was agreed, that if one should fall, the other should by no means desert; but stay and take care of the fallen one. In this sportive disposition, they arrived at length at the place; but they had not been long on the ground before the lady fell! The sportive gentleman discovering the situation of his associate, paid no regard to his solemn obligation; but immediately fled with all speed: but before he had proceeded more than two hundred yards, this high minded gallant shared the fate of his companion, and measured his whole length on the ground!! Of course, he was soon surrounded by a praying multitude!

But these meetings did not escape censure and opposition. It is difficult indeed to control a large collection of people, of every description; hence it is, that there might have been, and probably were, many irregularities. The enemies of these meetings, who were generally prejudiced and bigoted professors, or the wicked who had no liking for them; took advantage of every circumstance, and exaggerated every unfavorable occurrence to such a degree as to give a false and dreadful coloring. The reports, and some publications, put into circulation, are incredible. "What persecution ever went on," asks Mr. Asbury, "that priests had not a hand in it?" Some bigoted priests, on this occasion, were quite busy. They were much worse at misrepresentation than the wicked themselves. But in them the scripture has been verified, "The measure that ye mete shall be measured to you again."

These public testimonies against the work, particularly by ministers, were means of stirring up and encouraging those who were openly wicked, to come forth, to mock, oppose, and persecute; but even such were often unable to withstand the power; and sometimes in the very act of persecuting, they were struck down like men in battle; and so alarming was the sight, that others on foot and on horseback would try to make their escape, and flee away, like those who are closely pursued by an army in time of war, and be overtaken by the invisible power, under which they would be struck down, and constrained to cry out in anguish, and confess their wickedness in persecuting the work of God, and warn others not to oppose it. Thus many who were openly profane, were taken in the very act of persecuting the work, and like Saul of Tarsus, were made the happy subjects, and zealous promoters of it; while bigoted professors, who had encouraged them on, remained like the "*heath in the desert that seeth not when good cometh.*"

In 1802 we had the established number of conferences, seven in all. One alteration took place, which was that the western conference was held in the latter part of the preceding year.

We admitted on trial near seventy young preachers this year, which was a prety good supply for all our circuits.

We added 13,860 members to our society this year. This was the most prosperous year that the Methodists had ever seen in the United States. However, there was one year, 1790, in which we added almost 500 more; but the number of young preachers this year was considerably greater; and withal, we kept so many of the old preachers in the work, that we might well say, *The Lord is our helper and we will not fear.*

The work had spread through the middle states from the time of holding our general conference in 1800, and had been going on for some time in Kentucky and Tennessee states. There was scarcely any part of the country where the Methodist preachers traveled and labored, in which there was not a revival of religion.

In 1803 we had seven conferences, but one of them was held in October in the preceding year; but was entered on the minutes for that year.

We took about fifty young preachers on trial this year.

We added 17,336 members to the society this year, which was a much larger number than we had ever added in any one year. Our ministers and people, throughout the connection, were uncommonly devoted to God; and much engaged to promote his cause. Camp Meetings were encouraged in many places; and attended by many ministers, and by thousands of people in the lower parts of Virginia and North Carolina; at which seasons the Lord was pleased to visit us in a remarkable manner, both saints and sinners, old and young people; so that the mouths of many gainsayers were stopped, and the hearts of many sinners were touched, and happily changed and renewed.

To give a full account of the spread of the gospel, and of the revival of religion among us this year, would exceed the bounds of a short history.

There was a gracious reformation, and many converted in the city of Middletown, in the state of Connecticut, in the course of the summer and fall of the year. A number of the inhabitants went from the city by water down the river to what they called a kind of field-meeting, where the work began, and several were awakened; and some of them were converted as they returned home. From that time the work revived, and a good many persons were in a short time brought to the knowledge of God by the forgiveness of sins.

In Kentucky, the work of the Lord was very great: in Limestone circuit there were about three hundred added to the society, and sinners were flocking home to God in every direction. This work was not confined to one place, but spread greatly through the state. The work was great in Tennessee, and very many were raised from a death of sin, unto spiritual life.

At that time there was a great union between the Presbyterians and the Methodists; and they frequently communed together, and united in holding camp-meetings, and in preaching together. In the Western states, religion revived among other denominations as well the Methodists.

In 1804 we had eight conferences, one of which was a general conference.

At these conferences we admitted on trial upwards of seventy young preachers, which were more than were ever admitted among us in any one year.

This year we admitted 9,064 members to our society; making in all 113,134 Methodists in the United States: including those who are under our care in Canada. Thus hath the Lord blessed and prospered us in our christian and ministerial labors in the course of less than forty years.

This year we held our fourth general conference in Baltimore, which began on the sixth day of May. We had 111 preachers present, who were regular members of that conference. I will here give an account of the number of preachers from each annual conference, of which there are seven.

From the Western conference	-	3
South Carolina	do.	5
Virginia	do. -	17
Baltimore	do.	30
Philadelphia	do.	37
New York	do. - -	12
New England	do. -	4
		108
And three bishops		3
The whole was		111

The following rule was also formed: "The bishop shall not allow any preacher to remain in the same station or circuit more than two years successively." In some cases, prior to that rule, the bishop had appointed a preacher or preachers to the same place for three years together. We now determined on a better plan, and formed this rule, to prevent any preacher from wishing or expecting such an appointment in future.

Religion prospered among us very much during this year also; and we had pleasing accounts from almost every part of the connection.

In the latter part of the summer or beginning of autumn, there was a camp-meeting held low down in Virginia, near the town of Suffolk, where the power and presence of God was wonderfully displayed. The meeting began on Friday, and continued with but little intermission till Monday night, in which time it was thought that three or four hundred

persons were converted to God. The accounts from that meeting appear to be incredible to those who were not present; but those who were eye and ear witnesses, think it to be too great to be sufficiently described.

In 1805 we had seven conferences.

This year at the several conferences, we admitted about eighty young preachers upon trial.

The Methodists had increased more of late years in the United States, than formerly. We have more preachers, more circuits, more members, and (I may say) more religion, than we ever had at any one time before.

This revival of religion was not confined to the Methodists alone, but other denominations were highly favored of the Lord. However, my business is to speak particularly of the Methodists, and to point out some of the many things which the Lord hath done for them.

In 1806 our conferences were as follows:

The 198th conference was held in Scott county, Kentucky, on the 2d of October, 1805.

The 199th in Camden, on the 30th of December, 1805.

The 200th in Norfalk, on the 14th of February 1806.

The 201st in Baltimore, on the 14th of March.

The 202d in Philadelphia, on the 14th of April.

The 203d in New York, on the 16th of May.

The 204th at Canaan, in New Hampshire state on the 12th of June.

At these conferences we admitted upon trial upwards of eighty young preachers.

We added 19,625 members to the society this year; which was a large number of precious souls to be brought into the fold of Christ in one year. But it is an easy thing with the Almighty to forgive sins, and to do a great work in a short time.

There was a change made in the annual minutes this year, and for the first time the usual list of elders was left

out of the minutes, and only those entered who were ordained elders this year. However, in the stations the elder's names were printed in italic.

This was a prosperous year among the Methodists, and the work of God was carried on in many places, in an uncommon manner, both in the conversion and sanctification of precious souls. Indeed, the work was so great, that it appeared to be almost incredible among christians themselves who had never seen any thing to equal it before.

On the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, it was said that more than a thousand persons were converted at one camp-meeting, which lasted about five days and nights. The account was not merely a report, but it was given by ministers and people, who were eye and ear witnesses; and who had taken great pains to ascertain the exact number of those who during that meeting openly professed to be delivered from the burden of their sins. The preachers appointed different men to attend in different parts of the congregation, for the express purpose of taking an account of such as got converted, and to report accordingly; and from their report there were upwards of a thousand converted at one meeting; and a greater number, at another meeting of the same kind.

In 1807, we had our conferences as follows:

The 205th conference was held at Ebenezer, in Tennessee, on the 15th of September, 1806.

The 206th at Sparta, in Georgia, on the 29th of December 1806.

The 207th in Newbern, on the second of February, 1807.

The 208th in Baltimore, on the 2d of March.

The 209th in Philadelphia, on the 2d of April.

The 210th at Coeyman's patent, on the 2d of May.

The 211th in Boston on the second of June.

At these conferences we admitted upon trial a few more than a hundred young preachers.

Richard Whatcoat was a native of England, born in Gloucestershire; he became a traveling preacher in the year 1769. He traveled extensively through England and Ireland; and in the latter end of the year 1784, he came to the United States of America; and at the Christmas conference, he assisted in the ordination of Mr. Asbury. He labored among us after that, in various stations, in towns, cities, circuits, and districts, until the year 1800: he was then ordained a bishop, by the laying on of the hands of Doctor Coke, Mr. Asbury, and some of the elders: after which he traveled at large till he died. He traveled and preached in Europe and America thirty-seven years. He attended the conferences in the south in the preceding year, that is, in 1806, and continued to travel to the north as far as Dover in Delaware state, and there he yielded to his afflictions, and could go no further, and did not attend the three last conferences for that year. About three weeks after the last conference met he died, and of course there was no account of his death published until the following year.

His last affliction was very severe; he lay at the house of Richard Bassett, late governor of Delaware state, then residing in Dover, for thirteen weeks, and then departed this life in the full assurance of faith, on the 5th of July, 1806.

He was a pattern of piety and of patience; he let his moderation be known to all men. He was always serious and solemn, and seldom complained of any difficulties that he met with. He was an excellent preacher, sound in doctrine, and clear and plain in his explanations of the scriptures, with which he was particularly acquainted.

He might be ranked among the best of men, for meekness and patience, humility and sobriety; for watchfulness over his words, and for a smooth and even temper; and withal, for gifts and animation in preaching, especially in the latter part of his life. In his death, the preachers have lost a pattern of piety, and the people have lost an able teacher.

He traveled fifteen years in Europe, and twenty-two in America, which was thirty-seven years in all.

He was born in 1736. Converted September 3, 1758.

Sanctified March 28, 1761. Began to travel and preach in 1769.

Came to America in 1784. Was ordained Bishop in May, 1800.

He acted as bishop six years, and died at Dover, July 5, 1806.

We added to the society 14,020 members, which was a very great increase. The work of the Lord was very great during this year, in most parts of the United States.

In 1808, we had eight conferences, the last of which was a general conference.

We added to the society 7,405 members this year. Although our increase this year was not as great as it had been in some of the preceding years, yet we had great cause to be thankful for an increase of so many thousands.

In the month of May we had our fifth and last General Conference, and as we made some alterations in our rules and discipline, it will be necessary to take notice of them at this place.

The first alteration is respecting the general conferences in future, and as the change is very considerable, I will insert the rule at full length.

Q. "Who shall compose the general conference, and what are the regulations and powers belonging to it?"

A. 1. The general conference shall be composed of one member for every five members of each annual conference, to be appointed by seniority or choice, at the discretion of such annual conference: yet so that such representatives shall have traveled at least four full calendar years, from the time that they were received on trial by an annual conference, and are in full connection at the time of holding the conference.

2. The general conference shall meet on the first day of May, in the year of our Lord 1812, in the city of New York, and thence forward on the first day of May, once in four years perpetually, in such place or places as shall be fixed on by the general conference from time to time; but the general superintendents, with or by the advice of all the annual conferences, or if there be no general superintendents, all the annual conferences respectively shall have power to call a general conference, if they judge it necessary at any time.

3. At all times when the general conference is met, it shall take two thirds of the representatives of all the annual conferences to make a quorum for transacting business.

4. One of the general superintendents shall preside in the general conference; but in case no general superintendent be present, the general conference shall choose a president protempore.

5. The general conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our church, under the following limitations and restrictions, viz.

1. The general conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

2. They shall not allow of more than one representative for every five members of the annual conference, nor allow of a less number than one for every seven.

3. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.

4. They shall not revoke or change the general rules of the United Societies.

5. They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by committee, and of an appeal,

Neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the society, or by a committee, and of an appeal.

They shall not appropriate the produce of the book concern, or of the charter fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated and worn out preachers, their wives, widows and children. Provided nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of all the annual conferences, then a majority of two thirds of the general conference succeeding, shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions."

Our connection having spread very extensively, and the number of our preachers being much larger than they were formerly, it was thought best to make some new regulations about our general conferences in future, and the foregoing regulations were agreed to, by which means each part of the connection would have a proportionable number of preachers in the general conference.

The general conference elected another bishop, and William M'Kendree, of Virginia, had a large majority of votes. On Wednesday the 18th day of May, 1808, Bishop Asbury preached an ordination sermon in Light-street church, from 1 Tim. iv. 16. *Take heed to thyself and unto thy doctrine.* After sermon, William M'Kendree was ordained a bishop, by the laying on of the hands of Bishop Asbury, and four of the oldest traveling preachers present, which were, Freeborn Garrettson, Philip Bruce, Jesse Lee, and Thomas Ware.

There was a good deal of peace and union among the preachers at that general conference; and there were 130 traveling preachers who were members of that conference. Mr. M'Kendree had been a traveling preacher just twenty years when he was ordained a bishop. Most of the preachers returned from that conference well satisfied with what was done while we were together.

In 1809 we had the usual number of conferences.

According to the returns of members in the minutes, we had added 11,043 members to our society in the course of the year, which ended at the conference held in June last, 1809.

Since the beginning of the present year we have had a pleasing prospect of religion, in various parts of the United States: and the accounts, both verbal and written, from various persons, assure us that souls are coming to God by hundreds. At one camp-meeting, held near Lynchburg in August, it was supposed that as many as eighty souls were converted to God from the beginning to the close of that meeting, which lasted only a few days. Soon after that the work of God revived in the town of Lynchburg, and in the course of one week, it was thought that as many as eighty or ninety souls were born again. Such a wonderful display of the power and presence of God in the conversion of souls had never been known in that town.

In 1810 and 1811, the work of reformation progressed. The increase in 1810 was 11,525; and in 1811, 10,07. At this time the preachers had extended their labors generally through the United States and Canada; there were revivals of religion in various places; but we cannot give particular descriptions of them, our limits will not admit of it. The work is the Lord's, to Him be all the glory.

CHAPTER III.

From the first delegated conference, 1812, to the present time, 1830,—eighteen years.

At the general conference held in the city of Baltimore in 1808, on account of the great increase of our work, extend-

ing over so large a territory, the number of traveling preachers continually multiplying, it was resolved to establish a delegated general conference, to be composed of a certain number of delegates to be elected by the several annual conferences. This measure so necessary for the well being of the church, had been in contemplation by Bishop Asbury and others, elders in the ministry, for several years. When it was first proposed at this general conference, it met with a determined opposition, and was finally lost by a very considerable majority. Towards the close of the conference, however, it was reconsidered, and presented in a somewhat modified form, and very unanimously adopted.

The first delegated general conference was held in the city of New York, in May, 1812. Among others, as delegates, from the New York conference, was Mr. Garrettson; and such were the respect and confidence manifested towards him by his brethren, that at every subsequent general conference he was selected as one of their delegates. In this character, though he often differed with some of his brethren on certain points of church government, he always manifested the most stern and inflexible opposition to any innovation upon the established doctrines of the church; at the same time cheerfully bowing to the will of the majority on matters of indifference.

In respect to the question on which the general conference have long been divided in sentiment, namely, whether the presiding elders should continue to be appointed as they now are by the bishops, or be elected by the annual conferences, it is well known that Mr. Garrettson was in favor of their election by the conferences. This is mentioned merely as an historical fact, without entering into the merits of the question, pro or con, or intending even to express an opinion in relation to it, any farther than to say that, whether right or wrong, no doubt can be entertained but that Mr. Garrettson acted from the purest motives, and according to the best dictates of his judgment.

New York, Friday, May 1.—Our general conference (says Bishop Asbury) began. During the session I saw nothing like unkindness but once, and there were many and weighty affairs discussed. I hope very few rules will be made. We may disquiet ourselves in vain.

Sabbath 11.—At the African church in the morning: I preached also at the Hudson chapel; it was an awful time. A subject before the conference was the question, If local deacons after four years of probation, should be elected to the eldership by two thirds of the conference, having no slaves, and having them, to manumit them where the laws allowed it? it passed by a majority. On Saturday a motion was made to strengthen the episcopacy by adding another bishop.

Sabbath 17.—I preached at Brooklyn in our elegant house. After a serious struggle of two days in general conference to change the mode of appointing presiding elders, it remains as it was. Means had been used to keep back every presiding elder who was known to be favorable to appointments by the bishops; and long and earnest speeches have been made to influence the minds of the members: Lee, Shinn, and Snethen were of a side; and these are great men. Many matters of small moment passed under review, and were regulated. Mr. Shaw of London called to see me, and I had seventeen of the preachers to dine with me; there was vinegar, mustard, and a still greater portion of oil: but the disappointed parties sat down in peace, and we enjoyed our sober meal. We should thank God that we are not at war with each other, as are the Episcopalians, with the pen and the press as their weapons of warfare.

Sabbath 17.—At the Two Mile Stone my subject was 1 Peter iv, 6—9. I preached also at Greenwich, and at John-street chapel. On Monday I took an emetic, but I found I could not be sick in quiet, so unceasingly was I pursued by visiters and letters; so I made my escape to George Suck-

ley's and took to my bed. On Tuesday I breakfasted with Colonel Few. Some good widows collected above two hundred dollars for the poor preachers in the New-England states: sister Scney I must make honorable mention of as being very active in this labor of love. We made a peaceable ride of twenty four miles to mother Sherwood's. I have been kept from sinning, in much patience and affliction.

Numbers in society, 196,357. Traveling preachers, 688. Increase this year, 1812, 10,790.

A short account of the death of Bishop Asbury.

The following sketch of the closing scene of his life, is taken chiefly from the minutes of the conferences, for the year 1816; the only document now in our possession from which authentic information, in reference to this subject. can be derived.

It seems that notwithstand his extreme debility, which could not be witnessed without awakening the liveliest sensibilities, he flattered himself with the prospect of meeting the ensuing general conference, which was to assemble in Baltimore on the 2nd of May, 1816. In this expectation he was, however, disappointed; the disease with which he was afflicted terminating in the consumption, made such rapid progress as to baffle the power of Medicine, and to prostrate the remaining strength of a constitution already trembling under the repeated strokes of disease, and worn down by fatigue and labor. He appeared indeed, more like a walking skeleton, than a living man.

His great mind, however, seemed to rise superior to his bodily weakness, and to bid defience to the hasty approaches of dissolution. Hence impelled on by that unquenchable thirst to do good, by which he had been actuated for more than fifty years, he continued with his faithful traveling companion, John W. Bond, in a close carriage, to journey

from place to place, as his exhausting strength would permit frequently preaching, until he came to Richmond, Virginia, where he preached his last sermon, March 24, 1816, in the old Methodist church. Previous to his entering upon this last pulpit exercise, perceiving his great weakness of body some of his friends endeavored to dissuade him from preaching; but he resisted their dissuasions by saying, That he must once more deliver his public testimony in that place: yielding their own tenderness for his temporal welfare, to his desire to proclaim once more the counsel of his God, they carried him from his carriage in which he rode,—for he was unable either to walk or stand,—to the pulpit, and seated him on a table prepared for that purpose.

Though he had to make frequent pauses in the course of his sermon for the purpose of recovering breath, yet he spoke nearly an hour with much feeling from Rom. ix, 28. "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." This closed *his* public labors on the earth. The audience were much affected. Indeed how could it be otherwise? To behold a venerable old man, under the dignified character of an ecclesiastical patriarch, whose silver locks indicated that time had already numbered his years, and whose pallid countenance and trembling limbs presaged that his earthly race was nearly finished, to see in the midst of these melancholy signals of decay nature, a soul beaming with immortality, and a heart kindled with divine fire from the altar of God:—to see such a man, and to hear him address them in the Name of the Lord of hosts, on the grand concerns of time and eternity! what heart so insensible as to withstand the impressions such an interesting spectacle was calculated to produce?

After having delivered his testimony, he was carried from the pulpit to his carriage, and he rode to his lodgings.

On Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, he journeyed, and finally came to the house of his old friend, Mr. George Ar-

nold, in Spottsylvania. It was his intention to have reached Fredricksburgh, about twenty miles further, but the weather being unfavorable, and his strength continuing to fail, he was compelled to relinquish his design, and accordingly he remained under the hospitable roof of his friend, Mr. Arnold. Hearing brother Bond conversing with the family respecting an appointment for meeting, he observed that they need not be in haste. A remark so unusual with him gave brother Bond much uneasiness. As the evening came on his indisposition greatly increased, and gave evident intimations that his dissolution could not be far distant. About three o'clock next morning he observed that he had passed a night of great bodily affliction.

Perceiving his deep distress of body, and anxious to retain him as long as possible on the shores of mortality, his friends urged the propriety of sending for a physician; but he gave them to understand it would be useless, saying, That, before the physician could reach him his breath would be gone, and the doctor could only pronounce him dead! Being asked if he had any thing to communicate, he replied, That, as he had fully expressed his mind in relation to the church in his addresses to the bishop and to the general conference, he had nothing more to add.

About eleven o'clock on Sabbath morning, he inquired if it was not time for meeting; but recollecting himself, he requested the family to be called together. This being done agreeably to his request, brother Bond sung, prayed, and expounded the twenty first chapter of the Apocalypse. During these religious exercises he appeared calm and much engaged in devotion. After this such was his weakness, he was unable to swallow a little barley water which was offered to him, and his speech began to fail. Observing the distress of brother Bond, he raised his dying hand, at the same time looking joyfully at him. On being asked by brother Bond if he felt the Lord Jesus to be precious, exerting all his remaining strength, he, in token of complete victory,

raised both his hands. A few minutes after, as he sat on his chair with his head reclined upon the hand of brother Bond. without a struggle, and with great composure, he breathed his last on Sabbath the 21st day of March, in the year of our Lord 1816, and in the seventy first year of his age;—after having devoted to the work of the ministry about fifty five years, forty five of which were spent in visiting the cities, villages, and wildernesses of North America; during thirty of these he had filled the highly responsible office, and conscientiously discharged the arduous duties, of genal superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

His immortal spirit having taken its flight to the regions of the blessed, his body was committed to the earth, being deposited in the family burying-ground of Mr. Arnold, in whose house he died. His remains were, by order of the general conference, and at the request of the society of Baltimore, taken up and brought to that city, and deposited in a vault prepared for that purpose, under the recess of the pulpit of the Methodist Church in Eutaw-street. A vast concourse of the citizens of Baltimore, with several clergymen of other denominations, followed the corpse as it was carried from the general conference room in Light-Street to the place prepared for its reception in Eutaw-street; being preceded by Bishop M'Kendree as the officiating minister, and brother Black, a representative from the British to the American conference, and followed by the members of the general conference as the chief mourners. The corps was placed in Eutaw church, and a funeral oration pronounced by the Rev. William M'Kendree, the only surviving bishop; after which the body of this great man of God was deposited in the vault, to remain until the resurrection of the just and unjust.

It is needles to make reflections here, or to pass encomiums upon his character, not only because it would be anticipating his biography which is now preparing for the press.

but because the preceding journal* speaks for itself, and loudly proclaims the man deeply devoted to God, exerting all his powers of soul and body to promote "peace on earth and good will to men;" and who ceased not his labors until compelled by the command of Him who first called him into being. Let those now denominated missionaries read this Journal, and learn from the example of its author what it is to "endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus."

May that Church which so long enjoyed the service of this eminent minister of the sanctuary, and for whose prosperity he so diligently and conscientiously toiled and suffered, not only cherish a grateful remembrance of his Christian and ministerial virtues, but be long blessed with a succession of ministers who shall make *his* virtue *their* exemplar, and transmit to posterity unsullied those pure doctrines of Christ which *Francis Asbury* so faithfully and so successfully proclaimed.

New York April 23, 1821.

The work of reformation still progressed; in 1819, there were 240,924 members in society; increase this year 11,297. Traveling preachers 812.

May 1, 1820, the general conference set in Baltimore.

We present to our readers the following Report of the committee, appointed by the General Conference to take into consideration the state of missions, and to whom was referred the Constitution of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The alterations which are made in the constitution of this Society, are such as were recommended to be made by the board of Managers, and also such as were authorized by the 13th Article of the original Constitution, respecting the location of the Society, and the application of its funds.

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* Bishop Asbury's.

Report of the Committee to whom was referred so much of Bishop M'Kendree's address as relates to Missions.

Your Committee regard the Christian Ministry as peculiarly a *Missionary* Ministry. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," is the very foundation of its authority, and developes its character simultaneously with its origin.

The success which attended the Itinerant and Missionary labors of the first heralds of salvation, farther establishes the correctness of this view, and demonstrates the Divine sanction of this method of spreading the gospel.

In process of time, however, the Missionary spirit declined, and the spirit of genuine Christianity with it. Then it pleased the Lord to raise up the Messrs. Wesleys, Whitefield, and others, through whose Itinerant and Missionary labors, a great revival of vital piety was commenced, the progress and extent of which, at present, your Committee cannot but regard as cause of unbounded thankfulness and pleasure.

The Missions of Boardman and Pilmore; of Wright, of Asbury, and others, are events in our history not soon to be forgotten. A grateful people feel their happy influence, and hold their memory dear, and generations yet unborn will rise up and call them blessed.

Can *we* then be listless to the cause of Missions? We cannot. Methodism itself is a Missionary system. Yield the Missionary spirit, and you yield the very life-blood of the cause.

In Missionary efforts our British brethren are before us. We congratulate them on their zeal, and their success. But your Committee beg leave to entreat this Conference to emulate their example. The time, indeed, may not yet be come, in which we should send our Missionaries beyond

seas. Our own Continent presents to us fields sufficiently vast, which are opening before us, and whitening to the harvest. These, it is probable, will demand all the laborers, and all the means, which we can command at present.

You will permit your committee to mention some of those Missionary grounds, which may have a peculiar claim to your first attentions. They are the Canadas, the Floridas, the State of Louisiana; the Territories of Arkansas and Missouri; our Western frontiers generally, having regard to those who use the French, Spanish, or other foreign languages, as well as to those who use the English; together with any destitute places in the interior, in which circuits may not yet have been formed, and where it may be judged important to have efficient missions.

In a particular manner the Committee solicit the attention of the Conference to the condition of the Aborigines of our country,—the Indian tribes. American Christians are certainly under peculiar obligations to impart to *them* the blessings of civilization and Christian light. That there is no just cause to despair of success, through grace, in this charitable and pious undertaking, is demonstrated by the fact that there are already gathered into church fellowship about sixty members of the Wyandot tribe, in the state of Ohio; and that a successful mission, under our direction, is now in operation among them. Why might not similar success attend other missions among other tribes? Is the Lord's arm shortened that he cannot save our brothers of the forest? or is his ear heavy that He will not hear in their behalf?

The Government of the United States has manifested a disposition towards the Indians, which may contribute much not only to their civilization, but to their evangelization. Ten thousand dollars annually have been appropriated by Congress for the establishment of Schools among them. By this act it is required that the plan of education embrace, for the boys, in addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the

practical knowledge of agriculture, and of such of the mechanic arts as are suited to the condition of the Indians; and for the girls, spinning, weaving, and sewing. This your Committee consider a very judicious regulation, and perfectly compatible with the duties of Missionaries, of men of families, who might be established among them, as teachers in those Schools, whilst their wives would assist in the instruction of the girls in their appropriate departments. The civilization of the Indians, will promote their evangelization.

Indeed, your Committee are decidedly of opinion, that it is the rising generation among the Indians, to whom your attention should be chifly directed; and that the institution of schools among them, on the government plan, and under the government patronage, should be your first care. It will be necessary, at the same time, in the appointment of teachers, to select suitable persons, with a view to the ulterior object of Christian instruction, both to the youth and to the adult; which object, it is evident, will be greatly promoted by means of a common language; by the influence which a teacher will have over the youth; and by the free access which will be gained, through them, to their parents and friends. This is the course which has been pursued by our missionary brethren of the British Connection, in the island of Ceylon, and your Committee believe with great success.

Several denominations have already availed themselves of the proffered aid of Government above mentioned, and have flourishing schools, of a missionary character, now in operation, among different tribes.

The American board of Commissioners for foreign missions, have an establishment of this kind on the Chickamaugah, in the Cherokee country; and another among the Choctaws. At the first are about one hundred Indian children, and at the second from forty to sixty. This Board have also

directed their attention to the country west of the Mississippi; and an establishment similar to those above named is already in a state of forwardness there. Besides these, branches are organizing in different parts of the Cherokee and Choctaw countries; and measures are in operation to establish two other principal schools, one for the benefit of the Creeks, and the other for the Chickasaws.

The Baptist society have a school in Kentucky, at the Great Crossings, to which fifteen or twenty Indian children have been sent from the Indian country: and they are about to organize a school at the Valley Towns, in the Cherokee country.

At Spring-place, in the Cherokee nation, there has been a school for fourteen years, under the care of the Moravians; which is said to have been productive of much good.

The United Foreign Mission Society of New York are about organizing a school west of the Mississippi, and also for the benefit of the emigrant Cherokees. It is supposed they will go into operation in the course of this spring and summer.

Your Committee have felicitated themselves on the pleasing and inviting openings for such institutions which had appeared, particularly among the Wyandots; of which tribe, many, through the instrumentality of our missions, have already been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. But whilst we have been delaying, others have stepped in. The Agent of that tribe has informed a member of your Committee, that he has written to the Secretary of War to place the proportion of the ten thousand dollars per annum, allowed by Congress, which may be allotted to that agency, at the disposal of the Committee of Friends, on Indian concerns, in this city; and they have it in contemplation to open three schools, the ensuing summer, in the said agency.

Your Committee hope not to be understood as expressing any regret at the zeal of other denominations in so good a cause. Far from it. The mention of this is intended rather to provoke ourselves to love, and to good works. There yet is room.

From the above sketch it will be seen how the spirit of missions is diffusing itself in our country. It ought to be cherished, and rightly directed. If *we* do not cherish it, others will. It is of God, and will prevail.

Indeed, many of the Indians themselves, bordering on our improved settlements, are roused to a sense of their deplorable condition. With outstretched arms they cry to us and say, "Come and help us!" Your Committee believe it a call of Providence, which should be obeyed. With these views, they submit the following Resolution, viz.

Resolved, by the Delegates of the Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled,

That this Conference do highly approve of the institution of the Missionary Society, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the city of New York.

WM. RYLAND, *Chairman.*

Baltimore, May 15, 1820.

Bishop M'Kendree, President of this Society, for several years past, having devoted considerable time and attention to the missions among the natives of the forest, is represented as on a missionary visit to the Indians.*

"May 1, 1824," says Mr. Garrettson, "our conference opened at 8 o'clock, A. M. I am, and I hope I always shall be, and old fashioned Methodist, and therefore was not at all pleased that the conference should have been detained so long in fixing rules for the government of its pro-

* See plate 11, page 252.

ceedings. So did not the apostles, elders, and brethren, who assembled at the first council at Jerusalem, but being *full of faith and the Holy Ghost*, they acted in the utmost harmony one with another." This extract is introduced not as a censure on the general conference for adopting by-laws for the government of their deliberations, but to show the predilection of Mr. Garrettson for primitive simplicity and order.

At our general conference in 1820, it was resolved to open a more direct intercourse with our brethren in England by an interchange of delegates from one country to the other.* Accordingly in that year, the Rev. John Emory was sent by the bishops as our representative to the British conference. He bore with him the following letter :—

"BALTIMORE, May 27, 1820.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, to the British Conference of Ministers and Preachers, late in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley :

REV. AND DEAR BRETHREN,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to you, and to the Israel of God under your charge, both at home and in foreign countries. With a sincere and earnest desire to establish and preserve the most perfect harmony and peace with you, our elder brethren, we have adopted measures for opening such friendly intercourse as will, we devoutly pray, tend to the accomplishment of this desirable end.

Situated so remotely from each other, and under different forms of civil government, it is believed that no mode of correspondence will so effectually unite the European and American Methodists, as an interchange of delegates from our respective conferences.

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* This mutual intercourse had been kept up by the visits of Dr. Coke until the year 1804, since which time until the present it had been suspended, though the conferences continued an official correspondence with each other.

We are encouraged to hope that such correspondence will be acceptable to you, from the consideration of the visit of Messrs. Black and Bennett at our last session, and from the friendly opinion of our dear brother, the Rev. William Black, who has been with us during our present sitting in this city.

Should such a friendly intercourse be approved, we shall receive with cordiality your representative at our succeeding sessions, and, with the most sincere friendship and affection, reciprocate the visit.

The prosperity of your missions, both at home and in foreign countries, is matter of praise and thanksgiving to the great Head of the church; and our unceasing prayer is, that they still may increase more and more.

The last four years have been distinguished by no ordinary success within the field of our labor: our borders have been greatly enlarged, and the wilderness has budded and blossomed as the rose. The last year especially has been attended with an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the increase of our numbers has exceeded that of any former year.

The field of missionary labors is opening and extending before us, and the Divine providence appears to be preparing the way for the conversion of the Indian tribes on this vast continent.

The bearer, the Rev. John Emory, has been appointed our delegate to your body, and will be able to give you a more particular account of the work under our charge, and especially of our commencement and progress in the missionary cause.

Most earnestly praying that the Methodists may be identified in their doctrine, experience, and practice, in every part of the world, and that the Father of lights may pour upon you, and upon us, the Spirit of grace, and preserve us in the unity of faith, and in the fellowship and peace of his

Son Jesus Christ, we remain, Rev. and dear brethren, yours in the gospel of our common Lord.

Signed, by order and in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal church,

ENOCH GEORGE, *President*,
ALEXANDER M'CAINE, *Secretary*.

To which the British conference returned the following answer :—

"To the General Superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America:

DEAR BRETHREN,—We enclose to your care the resolutions passed by the conference, after the letters addressed to us by the *American General Conference*, and delivered by the Rev. John Emory, had been read and considered.

In addition to the expression of our sentiments contained in those resolutions, on the renewal of intercourse between the two conferences, we are directed to request you to convey to your next general conference our warmest thanks for those declarations of unabated brotherly affection toward us and the connexion, which your letters contain, and for the appointment of Mr. Emory as your representative.

In him we have recognized the purity of your doctrine, and the fervor and simplicity of your piety. We have received him not as a stranger, but as a "brother beloved." Our hearts are as his heart, and it will be remembered as one of the most pleasing circumstances connected with the conference held in this town, that our personal intercourse with you was here restored, and that this "work of love" was committed to so able and excellent a brother, whose public ministrations and addresses in our conference, have been equally gratifying and instructive to us and to our people.

From the statements made by Mr. Emory as to the progress of the work of God in the United States, we have received the greatest satisfaction. We offered our united thanksgivings to God, that the doctrines of primitive Meth-

odism, the preaching of which God has so eminently owned in the salvation of men, and the edification of believers, are not only continued among you in their purity, but have been so widely extended by your great and persevering efforts, and that the same holy discipline, in all its essential parts, continues, wherever you form societies, to guard and confirm the work which God has made to prosper in your hands.

For the state of our affairs in Great Britain and Ireland, and in our missionary stations, we refer you to Mr. Emory, who, as health would allow, has attended our sittings, and to those publications with which, before his departure, we shall be happy to furnish him, to be laid before you.

You will see that we have had to rejoice with you in the great extension of the work of God into the various parts of the British empire, and that the institutions of Methodism, which we have proved to be so well adapted to promote and to preserve true religion, are known and valued in every quarter of the globe. May we, with you, be the honored instruments of turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just in every place, and of hastening the universal kingdom of our Lord.

The resolutions on the disputes in the Canadas, were adopted after a calm and patient consideration of the case, in which we were greatly assisted by Mr. Emory. We hope they will lead to a full adjustment of those disputes, and that the affection which exists between the two connexions generally, will extend itself to the brethren and societies in the Canadas. This is the disposition which we shall earnestly inculcate upon those under our care in those provinces; and we have full confidence that the same care will be taken by you to extinguish every feeling contrary to love, among those over whom you have control and influence.

With earnest prayers for you, dear and honored brethren, in particular, on whom devolves the general direction of the affairs of the great body of Methodists in the western world,

and whose labors are so severe, but so glorious,—that you may be filled with wisdom for counsel, and strength to fulfil the duties of your great office;—and also for all your churches that they may have rest, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, may be abundantly multiplied,

We are, dear brethren,

Yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

JABEZ BUNTING, *President*,

GEORGE MARSDEN, *Secretary*.

Liverpool, Aug. 7, 1820."

The following are the resolutions referred to in the foregoing address:—

"Resolutions of the British Conference in reference to their relation with the American General Conference:

The Rev. John Emory having been introduced to the Conference as the accredited representative in our body of the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, presented a letter from that conference, and gave an interesting and encouraging statement of the prosperity of the work of God in the United States; which account the conference received with much satisfaction, and unanimously agreed to the following resolutions on the occasion, viz.

1. That the conference embrace with pleasure this opportunity of recognizing that great principle, which, it is hoped, will be permanently maintained,—that the Wesleyan Methodists are one body in every part of the world.

2. That the British conference have frequently rejoiced in the very favorable accounts which have been received, year after year, of the great and glorious work which God is graciously carrying on in the United States of America; but that it is with *peculiar pleasure* that they receive a *representative* from the general conference in America. The statement given by our beloved brother, Mr. Emory, of the

present state of Methodism in America, has been received with much joy; and the conference hereby expresses its high satisfaction, not only in the *declaration*, but in the *proof*, of the love of our American brethren in fully opening the way for a brotherly intercourse between the European and the American societies.

3. That the conference particularly rejoices in the zeal which is manifested by our American brethren, in carrying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Indian tribes, and in the success which God has already given to their labors in that natural and moral wilderness; and hopes, that the time is drawing near, when the *aborigines* of that vast continent shall become the mild and gentle followers of our gracious Redeemer.

4. That it is the earnest wish of this conference, that the kind and friendly intercourse which is now opened between the British and American conferences should be continued; and that, prior to the time of the next general conference in America, the British conference will appoint one or more of their body to visit our brethren in America, and to be present at their general conference.

5. That a letter shall be sent to the American brethren, containing these resolutions, and strongly expressing our high approbation of the selection of our highly esteemed brother, Mr. Emory, as their representative to our conference, and our earnest desire and prayer, that, in the spirit of Christian love, we may ever be one in Christ Jesus.

6. That there shall be a regular exchange of minutes, magazines, missionary reports and notices, and of all new original works, published by the European and American Methodists, from their respective book rooms."

This friendly intercourse being thus opened to the mutual satisfaction of the two great divisions of the Methodist family, this year, 1824, the Rev. Richard Reece was despatched as a representative from the British to the American general

conference, accompanied by the Rev. John Hannah as his companion. On the introduction of Mr. Reece into the conference, he presented the following letter, which was read by the secretary, Dr. Emory:—

"To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, assembled at Baltimore, in the United States of America:

DEAR BRETHREN,—The time has arrived which calls us, in pursuance of a resolution unanimously passed in the conference of 1820, held in Liverpool, to commission a deputation from our body, to attend your ensuing general conference, to convey to you the sentiments of our fraternal regard, and affectionate attachment, and to reciprocate that kind and friendly office, which, on your part, was performed by the visit of one of your esteemed ministers, the Rev. John Emory.

The increased interest in your spiritual welfare, which the establishment of this mode of direct and official communication between the two great bodies of Methodists, has naturally excited in us, and reciprocally, we believe, in you, is to us the first proof of its beneficial tendency, and a cheering indication of its future advantages. For why should the ocean entirely sever the branches of the same family, or distance of place, and distinct scenes of labor, wholly prevent that interchange of the sympathies of a special spiritual relationship which cannot but be felt by those who, under God, owe their origin to the labors of the same apostolic man:—bear testimony to the same great truths before the world,—and whose efforts to spread the savor of the knowledge of Christ, on our part through the British empire, and on yours through the population of these rising states, which have derived their language, their science, and their protestantism from the same common source,—Almighty God has deigned so abundantly to bless?

We received with heartfelt joy the messenger of your churches, the Rev. John Emory, bearing the grateful news

of the progress of the work of God in your societies, and were refreshed by the expressions of your charity. We now commit the same charge to the faithful and beloved brethren whom we have appointed to salute you in the Lord, that nothing may be wanting on our part to strengthen the bond of brotherly love, and to call forth mutual and united prayers for each other's welfare by a mutual knowledge of each other's state.

We are on the point of closing the sittings of the present conference, in which the perfect harmony of the brethren assembled has afforded matter for the most devout and grateful acknowledgments to God; both as it is the *indication* and the *result* of that entire affection and unity which exist among our societies throughout the united kingdom.—Through the mercy of God, we have rest on every side,—the discipline we received from our venerable founder is still enforced with unabated zeal, and under a conviction of its agreement with the word of God, cheerfully observed;—the value of those apostolic doctrines which distinguish us in the old and new world, was never, we believe, more powerfully felt among us, and never were they with greater fidelity exhibited in our public ministry; and, as a crowning blessing, numbers are yearly added to us and to the Lord, and the light and influence of the gospel are yearly extending, by the Divine blessing upon the labors of the brethren, into the still dark and uncultivated parts of our beloved country.—'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.'

You will also, dear brethren, partake of our joy in the success with which it has pleased God to attend the labors of our brethren in our different foreign missions.

The leading particulars of their state and prospects you will have learned from our Magazine and annual Reports, and it will therefore suffice to state, that in this department of the work of God committed to our charge, upwards of

one hundred and fifty of our preachers are employed; and that the zeal and liberality with which our people and the friends of religion generally co-operate with us in this hallowed work, answer to every call, and seem only roused to greater activity and enlargement as the sad condition of the pagan world is by new developments displayed before them. In the formation of regular missionary societies in your church, to promote the universal establishment of the kingdom of our adorable Savior, and 'to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,' we have greatly rejoiced; and in those encouraging dawnings of large success among the aboriginal tribes of your native continent, which have cheered the early efforts of those devoted men whom you have ordained to this blessed service. In addition to the *doctrines* in which we have been instructed, God has in his mercy given to us, as Methodists, a discipline adapted in a very special manner to missionary operations, to build up and establish infant religious societies among heathens, and to call forth in every place a supply of laborers for extending the work, and enlarging the cultivated field into the untilled and neglected wilderness. In the spirit of our great founder under God, who regarded *the whole world as his parish*, let the Methodists of Great Britain and America regard the whole world as the field of their evangelical labors: and mindful of this our high vocation, let us enter in at every open door, trusting in God to dispose the hearts of our people to provide the means necessary to carry our sacred enterprizes into effect; striving together in our prayers that from us the word of the Lord may 'sound forth to nations and kingdoms of men, of all colors and climates, now involved in the ignorance and misery of pagan idolatry, and sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.'

More fully to declare unto you our state, and to be witnesses of 'the grace of God in you,' we have appointed, and

hereby do accredit, as our representative to your approaching general conference, the Rev. Richard Reece, late president of our conference, and have requested the Rev. John Hannah, one of our respected junior preachers, to accompany him on this service. 'Beloved in the Lord and approved in Christ,' we commit them to the grace of God, and to your brotherly affection. We earnestly pray that your approaching assembly may be under the special guidance and benediction of our common Head, and that all your deliberations may issue in the lasting union and prosperity of your numerous and widely extended societies; that you may increase in faith and love; and that your labors may year after year continue to enlarge and establish in the western world the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—'to whom be glory in the church throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Signed in behalf of the Conference,

H. Moore, *President.*

Sheffield, Aug. 11, 1823.

After which Mr. Reece delivered the following address:—

"Mr. President,—The paper which has just been read, is an expression of the sentiments avowed by the British conference,—and in which I heartily concur;—sentiments of affectionate concern for the prosperity and advantage of our brethren on this side of the Atlantic. It afforded us much satisfaction to receive from you, by your excellent deputy, the Rev. John Emory, an overture to more frequent intercourse and closer fellowship of brotherly love. *Wesleyan Methodism* is one every where,—one in its doctrines, its discipline, its usages. We believe it to be the purest, simplest, most efficient form of Christianity, that the world has known since the primitive days. Doubtless, it is that which has had the sanction of Almighty God, in its rapid and extended success, beyond any other in modern times. It commenced, nearly a century ago, in the mother country,

in one of her universities, with a few young men, 'chosen vessels, meet for the Master's use.' Then, it was the 'cloud little as the human hand:'—now, it has spread widely, and is still spreading, over both hemispheres, while its fertilizing showers are descending upon Europe, America, Africa, and Asia, producing fruit wherever they fall,—the fruit of knowledge and holiness. Methodism is our common property. We are alike interested in its preservation and diffusion. It is a sacred trust committed to us. It is a heavenly treasure which we have to dispense for the benefit of man. Its spirit is not sectarian, but catholic, and embraces Christians of every denomination, who hold the essential truths of the gospel, and 'love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' Your brethren in England were never more concerned to preach its distinguishing doctrines of justification by faith, the direct witness of the Spirit in the hearts of believers, and salvation from all sin in this life, with simplicity, fidelity, and zeal, than at present;—never more concerned to enforce its discipline with firmness and love, and to 'train up' a people in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord:'—never more careful that it do not deteriorate in their hands, but that it be transmitted, pure and entire, to 'faithful men, who shall succeed to their labors: for which purposes they are anxious in their instruction, and strict in their examination of the rising race of preachers, that these may be sound in the faith, and lovers of our discipline. Many of them are all we can hope, young men whose 'profiting' has 'appeared unto all,' and to whom we can commit the deposit, without anxiety, believing that they will 'obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful.'

The result of this care and pains to preserve a pure and effective ministry, has been, and is seen in the blessing of God upon our labors, in an extension of his work through every part of our country, where 'great and effectual doors' are opening into new places, and the Lord is 'adding to his

church daily such as are saved.' The members of our society are also improving in personal holiness, and zeal for good works. They are more ready to concur with us in spreading the gospel abroad among heathen nations, as well as in tightening the 'cords' of our discipline at home. On the whole our prospects were never more bright, nor had we ever more reason to be encouraged.

My opportunities of intercourse with you since my arrival in this country, together with the satisfaction I have had in attending two of your annual conferences, where I met with many of my American brethren, render this one of the most interesting periods of my life. I have witnessed the disinterested and laborious zeal which distinguishes your character and conduct. I have seen the fruit of your labors in the excellent societies in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Winchester, and this city. The doctrines and discipline of Methodism, when rightly applied, do, under the blessing of God, produce a scriptural convesion, and form the genuine Christian character *every where;* and either at home or abroad, I find that a Methodist, who lives according to his profession, is a 'fellow heir' of the same 'grace of life.' My prayer is, in accordance with the prayer of the body whom I represent, that you may go on and prosper, until, as the honored instruments of God, you have diffused gospel light and life through every part of this vast continent, and every class of its interesting population;—that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be every where glorified in his disciples. *Amen.*"

Canada Conference.

This conference held its last session in Hamilton, Newcastle District, U. C. August 31, 1826. On the Friday previous to the commencement of the conference, a Camp-Meeting began in the town of Cramhe, which was attended

by a number of the preachers on their way to the Conference, and, besides a numerous audience of well behaved white people, by about one hundred Indians of the Mississauga Tribe.

In the October number of the Methodist Magazine for the present year, may be seen an account of the work of reformation among these people. They attended the Camp-Meeting at Crampe, and among their number, were several who had not yet embraced Christianity. They no sooner accomodated themselves with a convenient encampment, than they entered into the spirit of devotion with all that fervor which generally characterizes young converts, and with all the order and decorum which might be expected from the most mature and orderly congregation of experienced Christians. Indeed their order and solemnity became proverbial by all who had the happiness to behold them. The manner in which they conducted their devotions, was a strong evidence of the reality and depth of the work of grace in their hearts. They have a few verses of a hymn translated into their language; and generally when the white Christians had sung a verse, at the commencement of their public exercises, a verse was sung by the Indians in their own tongue: and after the Sermon was delivered to the congregation in English, an abridgement of it, simplified as much as possible, was delivered to the Indians, through a converted Indian Interpreter, William Beaver. These discourses were listened to by them with the most profound attention, and it is believed, with a most lively faith. At one time when the substance of a sermon was delivered to them on the necessity and influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart, mingled with some anecdotes respecting its blessed effects among some other Indian Tribes, the Interpreter became so affected, and apparently so *filled* with the Holy Spirit, that his utterance was choaked, and he could only weep and rejoice aloud. The effect of these exercises on the whole au-

dience, whites as well as colored, seemed to be most salutary and cheering. They wept and rejoiced together "for the consolation."

During the progress of the meeting, from fifteen to twenty of the people who had accompanied their converted brethren to the place, professed to find peace with God, through faith in the Lord Jesus; and they gave every evidence which could reasonably be expected they should give in so short a time, and under their circumstances, of the reality of the work. On Sunday morning, the writer of these remarks beheld one of the most pleasant objects his eyes ever looked upon. Forty adult Indians, with countenances beaming with joy, and with a solemnity which indicated the sincerity of their hearts, were arranged in a circle, in front of the stand to receive the ordinace of baptism. The nature of this Christian rite was explained to them, as well as the solemn obligation under which they laid themselves to renounce their heathen and wicked courses, and hereafter to keep God's holy commandments. Nor was it neglected to impress on their minds the necessity of divine aid, the constant aid of the Holy Spirit, which they were to expect only on condition of their watchfulness, their prayer and faith, to enable them to persevere in their work. They then bowed a most cordial and hearty assent to the questions proposed to them in the formulary of Baptism; and they were solemnly consecrated to the holy profession of Christianity, by being baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. During this solemn service, some of these newly converted children of grace, seemed to be overwhelmed with a sense of the divine presence, and their prostrate souls adored our God and their God. After this, twenty-three of their children were dedicated to God in the ordinance of baptism.

Much might be said in praise of these things; but it is thought best to leave the facts to speak for themselves, and wait for the fruits to bear witness in due season.

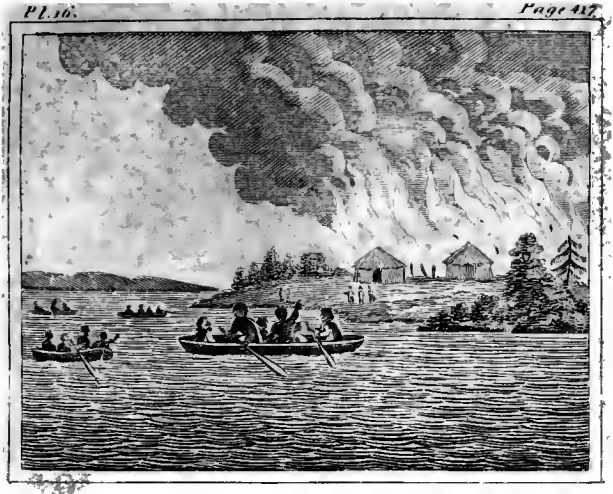
With a view to receive all the instruction they could, they went to the place of the Conference, and encamped in a small grove in the immediate neighborhood. Here Peter Jones,* of whom mention has been made in former accounts of the work of God among the Indians of Upper Canada, met them, and endeavored to strengthen their hands in the Lord.

It may be proper to observe, that this tribe of Indians, which is greatly reduced by their former habits of life, their intemperance, and the abominable peculation of mercenary white men, for the conveniency of hunting and fishing, are separated into several minor parts in the wilderness. As the news of what God is doing for them reaches these wandering portions of them, they are induced to come in, either to the Credit or Belville, where the converted ones mostly reside, to see and hear for themselves. While at the Conference, about twenty came there from Rice Lake, accompanied by the chief of the tribe. After listening attentively to the word of life, and witnessing for themselves the great change wrought in the hearts and conduct of their brethren, they also believed, and immediately with strong cries and tears they sought the Lord until they found him.

In the dusk of Sabbath evening the writer paid them a visit in their camp. He found the new comers, in the form of a semi-circle, all on their knees, while the others having a considerable space between them, formed another similar circle, all devoutly engaged in prayer to God. A converted chief, by the name of Sunday, was fervently leading their devotions. After listening for a while to these prayers "in an unknown tongue," he requested the liberty of speaking a few words to them. They all arose, and waited in solemn silence. The Interpretor was requested to ask the chief what induced him to come down there. Never did a Roman orator speak with more deliberation, emphasis, and apparent energy. He said, "I heard, while in the wilderness, of the

* See Plate 14, second engraving.

Pl. 16. Page 417



BURNING
of the Indian habitations on Rice Lake

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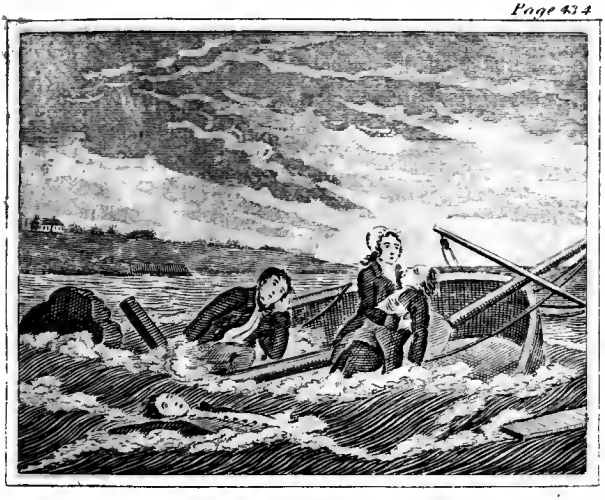

SHIPWRECK of the MISSIONARIES
in the West Indies near Antigua 1826

great work going on among my people, and I came down to see, and hear, and examine for myself." He was then asked, if he was convinced of the evil of his former habits. "Yes." Are you determined to reform? "Yes." How did you feel when convinced of your sinfulness? Putting his hand to his breast, he said, "I felt very sick here. I now feel well—happy." They were then exhorted to steadfastness in the faith, and the writer left these interesting and much abused people with the most pleasing anticipations of their future prosperity, thinking that the pleasure resulting from what he saw of their order, their devotion, the willingness and eagerness with which they receive the truth, and from contrasting in his mind the former with their present state, was an ample compensation for a journey from New York to Hamilton in Upper Canada.

Plate 16 represents a destructive fire in the woods at Lake Simco, supposed to be the work of an evil designing man. This fire was very alarming, and threatened the missionaries and their station with destruction. The natives promised to stand by and aid them. When the devouring element drew near and they saw they must flee, the pious Indians held a prayer meeting before they left the beloved spot where the Lord had so frequently blessed them, then, they with the mission family took to their canoes, and so escaped destruction. Miss Barns, of the mission family, spoke of this as a very terrific scene and trying time, but the Lord supported and preserved them.*.

Mrs. Jones' narrative.

Mr. Hyde received the account of the circumstances of the wreck from Mrs. Jones, upon her partial recovery. This was published in the *missionary notices* for July last as a part of Mr. Hyde's journal. Since Mrs. Jones has returned to England, she, at the request of the committee, has furnished the following narrative:—

* See plate 10 - [illegible] ng.

Wednesday, February 1, 1826.—Mr. Jones and myself left our dear people at Parham, in Antigua, engaged in prayer for our safety, and a speedy return. After a very affecting parting, we set out for the district meeting, held in St. Christopher's; at six o'clock we arrived at St. John's. We expected to go on board immediately; but the brethren thought it advisable that all of us should stay the night on shore, and sail early next morning. This was agreed upon: and as it was the missionary prayer meeting, Mr. Hiller, Mr. Oke, and Mr. Jones attended. Mr. Jones commenced with singing and prayer, Mr. Oke read the affecting account of the anxieties of our brethren in New Zealand. The congregation were deeply affected. Mr. Jones concluded, by solemnly commending our dear people, with ourselves and the rest of the mission family, to God. How mysterious are the ways of the Most High!—Little did we think that this would be our last meeting in Antigua: or the people, that their ministers were so soon to be summoned to their eternal rest.

Next morning, about eight o'clock, many of our friends came to bid us farewell. Brother White prayed; and, after a very affecting parting with our people, we went on board, and very soon set sail. The day was fine and pleasant: nothing particular occurred. Before sunset, we were in sight of St. Kitts. A little after seven, we made the harbor and landed. Some of the friends met us on the beach. It was very affecting and gratifying, as we walked through the town, to hear several negroes blessing their *Great Massa* for bringing us in safety. The kind lady, at whose house we were appointed to stay during the district meeting, welcomed us to her house, and we were treated with the greatest kindness.

On Friday we went to the mission house, and heard the painful intelligence of brother Gilgrass's illness, and that no hope was entertained of his recovery. Mrs. Gilgrass informed him of our arrival: he said, "Let me see them."

We entered the room: he shook our hands, and said, his desire and prayer had been that he might see us once more: he spoke of his confidence in God, and of the glory into which he should soon enter. This was a source of great comfort to us.

On Sunday the large chapel in Basseterre was well filled to hear the missionaries preach.

On Monday morning, the district meeting commenced, at which the missionaries were engaged all the day.

Saturday night, the band meeting was held. How true is it that real religion is the same thing every where? Our dear black and colored people would, however, often shame us at home, on account of the readiness and simplicity with which they speak of the things of God.

Sunday, 11th.—Brother Hyde preached an excellent sermon in the morning. Afterwards the sacrament was administered by the brethren. We looked round, and saw with joy the numbers waiting to commemorate the death of that Savior, whose power to save there was so much reason to believe they had experienced. I then thought if our friends in England had seen the sight, how powerfully it would have stimulated them in collecting, in praying, and exerting themselves in every way to promote the cause of missions. What has been effected by the blessed gospel among this people, none can tell but those who have witnessed it. Our hearts were deeply affected and encouraged to persevere in that glorious cause to which God had called us.

Monday 12th.—We attended the funeral of brother Gilgrass. A great number of people assembled.

Wednesday, 21st.—The business of the district meeting closed. The next morning the sacrament was administered to the missionaries.

I shall pass over what Mr. Hyde has said about our arrival at Montserrat, our sailing from thence, and being driven back.

Sunday, 26th, *Montserrat.*—Brother Hiller read the prayers and lessons for the day. The epistle was from 2 Cor. xi. During the reading of St. Paul's sufferings, my mind was deeply affected. At the words, "A night and a day I have been in the deep," the horrors of a shipwreck were suddenly presented to my view so forcibly, that I said to myself, "I could suffer any thing but shipwreck." The impression remained; and during the service it would still recur to my throughts, "A night and a day I have been in the deep;" and not until evening did I obtain relief from these horrible feelings.

Monday morning, whilst at prayer, the same impression returned; and as there appeared something so mysterious in this circumstance, in our delay, and other events, I could not but ask myself in silence, "What can this mean?" After much prayer, and much deliberation, as to leaving our own vessel, we went on board the Maria mail boat. And here I wish it to be understood, that brother White was not more determined to go in the Maria than the rest: for all were anxious to get to their labors in Antigua. I mention this, as I have heard him censured for removing to the Maria.

As soon as we got on board we retired to our births: the children had a bed on the cabin floor with the nurses. We soon set sail, and were much pleased with our comfortable accommodations. We often spoke of brother and sister Hyde, and of the kindness of several of the gentlemen and friends during our stay in Montserrat. In the course of the night the wind rose very high, and the sea became rough. We, however, went to sleep.

Tuesday, 28th.—The morning was stormy, the sea breaking upon us so that we could not go on deck, and the wind was right ahead. All were very sick except myself and Mr. Hiller. Mrs. White was afraid the vessel would upset. Sister Truscott often inquired if we were approaching land.

About four o'clock there was a cry of Land! Antigua in sight!" Mr. Miller called to us below, and bade us be of good cheer, as we should soon be on shore. The children revived, and said to each other, they should soon forget their sea sickness.

Mr. White's little boy, William, opened the hymn book, and gave out a hymn; the rest of the little ones joined in singing; and then William, with a sense far above his years, began telling the other children the account of the prophet Jonah, and other bible histories. I recollect it as a curious coincidence, that the little fellow, with an emphasis and seriousness which then powerfully called my attention, gave out the verse beginning with,

"Though waves and storms go o'er my head."

I had lain in my birth listening to the children, when suddenly my mind became greatly disturbed. The feeling was one I never experienced, for I was a stranger to fear at sea. My mind was filled with horror: I feared the vessel would sink, or something terrible happen. I attempted to pray but for the moment could not. At length I cried, "Lord! Lord! help me!" I had scarcely uttered the words, when my mind became composed; and though my apprehension for the safety of the vessel did not leave me, I repeated with great comfort that verse of our hymn,

"Jesus protects; my fears begone!
What can the Rock of Ages move?"

I also sung

"When passing through the wat'ry deep,
I ask in faith his promised aid," &c.

My mind remained stayed on God, though an oppressive anticipation of evil hung over me.

About this time the steward brought down a light in the lantern; the sea began to be very rough. Several times brother and sister Truscott were alarmed, and thought the vessel would upset: but little William kept saying to his mother, "Mamma! don't be afraid! no danger! Mamma must not be frightened; we shall soon be on shore." Soon after the steward came down in great haste: by his countenance we saw something was amiss. He took up the lantern in haste; and when sister White asked him what was the matter, he made no reply. We all jumped out of our births: the children and nurses were on the floor, and all were tumbled together, as the vessel turned on her beam ends. The sea broke over us, and washed down into the cabin. With great exertion we got out: the mothers and nurses pushed up the children, every parent claiming his own. Brother White gave me his dear little baby, whilst he was helping the others up. Mr. Jones came and laid hold of me, and assisted me to the side of the vessel which was highest out of the water. I asked him what was the matter: he said "There is danger! let us pray! The vessel has struck on the reefs, and there is no hope of being saved!" I remained holding to the side, with the sweet little baby in my arms, until the sea came so strong upon us, that I thought it proper to give it to its mother. I kissed the dear creature as I parted with it, and almost felt a mother's feelings. The captain cried out "Oh my vessel! what will become of us?" The sailors appeared panic struck. The sea came rushing upon us, and washed away the boat with a negro in it, who had been hit by the boom, and thrown into it in a senseless state. The mate, seeing the boat thus launched jumped into it, intending to bring it to our rescue; but the sea running high, it was carried down with the current. Now there appeared no hope of help. The captain looked eagerly after the boat, but it was soon out of sight in a fit of despair he cried, "Oh! my men are gone! the

boat is capsized!" All our hopes fled. The cries of the sailors were very great; and the missionaries exhorted them to pray. The poor men clung about the missionaries, and eagerly caught all they said. Then the captain ordered them to cut away the mast and rigging, he himself assisting. We were clinging to the bulwarks, and all engaged in prayer to God.

The fury of the sea continuing, suddenly broke up the vessel. The captain, with four sailors, the brethren Hillier, Oke, and Jones, clung to the bows of the vessel; myself, brother White and family, brother Truscott, wife and child, two nurses, one gentleman passenger, and several of the sailors, who were holding by the bulwarks on the quarter deck, at once went down with that part of the vessel to which we had trusted ourselves. When the wave had passed over, Mr. Jones cried out for me. I heard him and cried out, "I am going!" But my feet were entangled in the rigging, which was the cause I was not washed away with the rest. Mr. Jones, finding I was not far off by my voice, said, "Put out your hand." I put it out above the water, and he brought me up from a watery grave. I now heard the heart-rending shrieks of the dear children: their cry was, "Oh, mamma! I am drowning! Oh, papa! save me! save me!" The little baby's cries were distressingly distinct.

One of the nurses had two children of her own on shore; she cried, "Oh what will become of my children? They will be fatherless and motherless!" She then began to pray. Mr. Jones perceiving her clinging to a part of the floating wreck in the water, but there was no possibility of helping her. He called out to her, "My sister! pray, oh. pray to God to receive your soul! He will provide for your children; leave them to him!" She said, "Yes," and then said, "Lord, receive my soul! take me to thyself!" and calmly resigned her spirit to God. The other nurse cried

"Farewell, Aunt! farewell, sisters! we shall never meet on earth again! Oh, let us meet in heaven!" I trust. Eliza's prayer when drowning will be fully answered. She then said, "Farewell, Mrs. Jones! we shall meet in heaven!" I replied, "Farewell."

When the wave which broke up the vessel had passed over, the captain saw that I was rescued, and directed that I should be brought to the bowsprit. The captain said "Let us cling to this part of the vessel, as it is the firmest, and will remain the longest together." He then inquired if I was safe: I answered, "Yes," but thought I should soon be exhausted, as I was very cold, through sitting in the water, with my head just above the surface. I had no bonnet on, and the pieces of wreck came washing against me, and soon tore up the gown which I wore; so I had nothing to keep me warm. Mr. Jones pressed me to take his coat, but to this I could not consent. The captain, however, brought me an old jacket, which I thankfully received in this time of extreme necessity. As we sat on the wreck, the cries of the drowning sufferers, [who appear for a short time to have been supported by the floating rigging and wreck], reached us from all parts: the brethren and sisters, with broken accents, still commending their souls to God. Nothing but a full assurance that their sufferings would soon be ended, and that they would soon be admitted into glory, could have supported us in these awful moments: and they only reminded us of what we expected at length to be our own lot.

Every wave that came, appeared like a mountain, and threatened us with destruction. Oh what a scene of horror presented itself: No moon,—no stars,—the sky dark,—the wind bursting in gusts upon us,—the sea roaring upon the rocks,—nothing to be seen but the lights in the harbor; Twice I lost my hold in consequence of a large dog that was on board attempting to get on the wreck. The poor

animal seeing my head out of water, came and put his feet upon it, and I was very near being suffocated before the brethren perceived my danger.

By this time the cries and groans of the drowning sufferers had ceased. Mr. Jones remarked, "Now our brethren's sufferings are over." Brother Hillier often spoke of his dear wife and children. The promise being named, "I will be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless," he answered, "Yes," and calmly resigned them to God.

Very little was said, except to the captain and sailors. who often inquired what they must do to be saved. The missionaries pointed them to Jesus, as the friend of sinners. Oh, how they died, preaching Jesus to the poor men! As that part of the ship we sat on still remained together, the captain said there was hope if we could hold on until morning.

Wednesday, March 1.—The night appeared very long: towards morning every eye was directed towards the sky. anxiously longing for day break. At length the sky cleared, and the sea was much calmer. We next discerned the tops of hills, and then the sun burst forth. Brother Hillier clasped his hands together, and said, "Bless God! we see the light of another day! Now, my sister, we shall soon have help!" The captain said, if we had something with which to make a signal, it would soon be discerned. Mr. Oke and Mr. Jones took off their cravats, and tied them to a piece of wood and hoisted it. The brethren often named the dear people in Antigua, saying, "If they knew our situation, we should soon have help. Oh, how many would come to our aid!" Brother Oke said, pointing to an estate opposite us, "That is Mr. Byam's estate; it is not more than three miles distant, perhaps they may see us, and come to our assistance." The house stands on a high hill, and commands a view of the sea. They could see with a telescope much farther than the reefs where we were wrecked: but

Mrs. B. informed me afterwards, that though scarcely a day passed without some one looking out with the glass, during the three days we were on the wreck, they had never thought of using it; had they done so, they must have seen us.

To day, the bodies of some of those drowned were seen floating with the rigging full in view; our feelings at this sight cannot be described. It made me shrink from a watery grave, and long to die on shore. My mind was, however, led to contemplate the bliss of which their freed spirits were then partaking, and I had great comfort from this consideration. The captain ordered the sailors to cut the rigging adrift. It was so entangled with the wreck, that it prevented the dead bodies from floating away from us. The captain was very kind, and encouraged us all in his power. Vessels began to appear in sight. We saw a brig enter the harbor, which came very near us. We saw the sailors on board; the captain even said, "They are coming now!" We eagerly looked and wished for the moment of deliverance. At length we saw a schooner coming down towards us: brother Hillier said, while joy beamed in his countenance, "Now, sister Jones, help is coming!" Tears ran down his face, whilst he exclaimed, "I shall see my children again." Thus our hopes were raised; but the schooner tacked about, and was soon out of sight.

Despair filled the minds of the sailors: the poor men often wondered that the men at Goat Hill Battery did not see them. The captain said, "He cannot be looking out." Mr. Kentish told me afterwards, that the man appointed to look out and make signals if he saw a vessel in distress, was not at his post, but on the other side of the island, which was one reason why we sat three days on the wreck without help; he was afterwards discharged, and another appointed.

Mutual inquiries were now made into the state of our minds, in this time of distress; and it fully appeared by what was said, we were all kept in peace: the missionaries

throughout were perfectly calm. As to myself, the lines of the hymn before mentioned, "Jesus protects; my fears be gone," &c. were constantly dwelling on my mind. Mr. Jones said, how thankful he was to see me bear it so well, and hoped I was still resigned to die. I said, "Yes, but sometimes I think I shall be saved. I cannot think of any thing else. I see much power in God, and my faith is so strong; but yet my mind is comfortably willing for God to do any thing with me."

Two of the sailors were so exhausted, that at times the waves washed them from their seats, and the other seamen several times recovered them; but all was in vain. The sea broke upon us, and washed the cook away; the steward was next carried off, and while clinging to the frame of the wreck, when drowning, we heard him praying for mercy. He was close by us when struggling with death, and when the sea washed him away he was still calling upon God.

We began to feel hunger. Brother Hillier complained of this, and seemed to want food the most. The day was now passing away; boats and schooners were still scudding along; but none approached us. The two remaining sailors were earnestly inquiring, "What must we do to be saved?" The missionaries pointed them to Jesus, and encouraged them to pray. They clung to the brethren, and would not be satisfied but when they were talking. Oh, how eagerly did they receive every word of comfort and instruction! One poor black man often cried out, "Massa! Massa! my great Massa! have mercy! have mercy!"

Night was fast approaching; and as no help had arrived, we concluded it would be the last we should see. The sun set, the wind rose, the sea swelled, and the waves came with greater violence. This brought to mind the horrors of the preceding night; and I trembled at the thought of passing another night in that situation. We were seized with cold, and sat shivering, clinging to each other to keep us warm.

I shall never forget, so long as memory continues, the kind attention paid to me by the brethren and captain. This night was almost as bad as the former one; but truly it was a night of prayer. If ever I felt the real value of religion, it was then. How foolish, how empty was every thing besides! How valuable was the little which I had, in time of danger!

Thursday, 2*d*.—At length day light appeared, but our hopes were not so elated as the morning before. We had then thought it impossible not to have help; but one day's experience proved the contrary. The captain and sailors with the rest, seemed to have very little hope; but as the sun burst out, we revived and hoisted our signal. The sea was not running so high as before. The captain said, if it was not for the current, one might swim as far as Sandy Island, which was but a mile and a half from us. Sometimes the sailors would say, "A schooner is coming!" We all thought so, and were ready to plunge into the water to meet it: again our hopes were blasted. Nothing but the grace of God enabled us to submit; or we should have been like the poor captain and sailors, impatient for help.

Towards twelve o'clock by the sun, the sea became much calmer. Brother Hiller named his intention of swimming, if he could, to shore. The captain told him, he perhaps might swim to Sandy Island. Brother Hillier not being aware of the strong current with which he would have to contend, seemed confident, and said, when a boy he could swim well. The captain said, he could not swim, or he would try. Brother Hillier said, he thought it his duty, then, to make the attempt to save himself and the rest. After praying for each other, he shook our hands, and said, "Farewell! God bless you! If we never meet on earth we shall meet in heaven!" He took out his watch, and gave it to brother Oke, who sat the next to him, and said, "Here is my watch: If I should not succeed, and you should be saved.

give it to my wife." He then made ready and said, "Now brethren, it is for you as well as myself that I make the trial. If I get on shore I shall soon send out boats." He then said, "God bless you!" and plunged into the water. He set out very well; he swam, I should suppose, thirty or forty yards. We all had hopes; but he was obliged to stop; the current was too strong against him, or I believe he would have made the shore. After sometime he returned back and endeavored to reach the wreck: he got within a few yards, and a wave washed over us: when it had passed, I saw brother Hillier on my side of the wreck, and I cried, "O captain! brother Hillier is drowning!" The captain said, all was over; for they should only lose their own hold, and could not save him, but endanger their own lives. The captain laid hold of a piece of wreck and pushed it out to him. Our poor brother attempted to lay hold of it, but again he was washed away. At last, being quite exhausted, he gave us a last look, and shut his eyes. What were our feelings! not a word was spoken; but his groans were heard. I shut my eyes; the sight I could not bear. The captain watched him, and soon he was carried down with the stream, and out of sight.

Mr. Jones said, "Brother Hillier's sufferings are at an end; and this will soon be our fate. We cannot live much longer." I found I got much weaker. Brother Oke said, "Our number gets less; it will soon be our lot." I could not speak; my heart was too full. I thought of brother Hillier's wife and family, and our own loss, for in our situation we felt the loss of every one; and now began to say, "Who will be the next."

The want of food and water was almost insupportable, as we had nothing from Monday night, and this was Thursday. Our longing for water was indescribable, as the salt water washing into our mouths, caused us to suffer more from thirst than we otherwise should have done. I now suffered

also much from cold. Mr. Jones took off his coat, and insisted on my putting it on; as, being a great coat, he thought it would keep me warmer. I availed myself of it, and he put on the jacket which the captain had kindly given me.

Towards sunset, brother Oke, seeing no hope of our being saved, asked the captain if he thought they could make Sandy Island if they got on the mast that was floating by us. The captain said he had little hope, all of them being so weak, but he would try. He then laid hold of the rope; and the mast was brought to. While the captain and brother Oke were making ready, Mr. Jones said to me, "We shall soon be alone." I asked him if he wished to try with them. He said if I were not with him he would. I then told him, I would attempt it by getting on the other mast; or, if he would make the attempt with the captain, I would remain clinging on the bowsprit. Mr. Jones replied, "No, my dear, I will not leave you! We will remain together as long as we can."

The wreck began to unjoint, and we expected before morning it would quite separate. We suffered much from pieces of wood with nails in them, which, by the force of the water were driven against us, and tore our flesh. On that day the sun greatly scorched me; for, as I had no bonnet to screen my face, both my face and hands were blistered, and afterwards the skin and my finger nails came off. I am astonished, that after all I still live, and possess the perfect use of all my limbs and faculties.

The captain and one sailor got on the mast, but it would not answer, as it turned round with them. The captain was near being washed away; but he and the sailor got back on the wreck and said, they could not hold on the mast, and so they gave up the attempt. Vessels still were passing near us; the men were quite discernible, and we often said, "They must see us!" On the beach of Goat hill, we could also see people walking; and the negroes at work on an es-

tate opposite. This was more trying than if we had seen no one.

Night again came on; and, as before, we expected it would be the last. Nature was almost exhausted; on the previous nights the sea ran much higher, so that we could scarcely keep our hold, and this exhausted our strength; but on this night, the swell was not so great, and we were able to get a few minutes' sleep. One kept watch whilst the others slept. I was not so sleepy as brother Oke and Mr. Jones, and I supported them while they slept. Brother Oke said he was quite surprised that I held it out the best; and Mr. Jones expressed his great thankfulness to God that I was kept so calm, and was so mercifully sustained. Indeed, with gratitude I remember the goodness of God to me; so that it was my greatest satisfaction to help them; and my own sufferings were lessened by the attentions I was able to afford to them.

When Mr. Jones awoke he appeared much better; he then looked out while I slept. In my sleep I dreamed that help would come on that day; but of this there did not seem to be any hope.

Friday 3*d*.—Towards morning I was so faint with a violent pain at my stomach, that I could not support myself. When the sun broke out, the faintness increased, and I thought I was dying. I told Mr. Jones so, who said he saw I was much altered. He appeared to feel much for me; and, to revive me, bade me remember my dream: "Perhaps to day," said he, "help may come. Do not give up, for my sake." I remained very ill until the sun became warm, then I gradually revived.

They day was much clearer than before, and we were much burnt with the sun. Poor brother Oke was so weak he scarcely moved his hand. The captain and sailors appeared ready to yield; and frequently remarked it as strange, that the fishermen did not set out a fishing, as there were fish pots

placed all round us. In the course of the morning we saw a small boat not far from us, and hailed it. The captain and sailors said, "The people in the boat must see us;" but they did not speak, nor come to our help. After my recovery, I was informed by a gentleman on whose word I can depend, that it was through a fisherman mentioning he had seen the wreck about eleven o'clock, that assistance was sent out to us.

The captain now thought of lead, as useful, when chewed, to relieve thirst, and ordered one of the sailors to get some from the port hole. The captain gave me a little, and Mr. Jones got a little. O how eagerly did I bite a piece! The captain warned me against swallowing it, as it would soon kill me. I found it relieved me much.

Few words now passed between us. All seemed engaged in prayer. To-day the bodies of the children floated in our sight. Mr. Jones became drowsy, and could not keep awake. Several times he was washed from me, but I recovered him. I held him while he slept. After sleeping, he was much refreshed, and desired me to sleep, and he would wake me when the waves came. While I was thus sleeping, brother Oke thought he could swim to shore. I believe he could not have been perfectly sensible at the time, as there appeared no possibility of his reaching shore. The captain and Mr. Jones attempted to persuade him not to try, but all in vain: he shook hands with Mr. Jones, and after a painful parting, was about to wake me, but Mr. Jones said, "Spare her feelings, do not wake her!" He then plunged into the water, but had not strength to use his hands, and very soon was carried away. When I awoke, missing brother Oke, I inquired whether he had been washed away, and was informed of the circumstance by Mr. Jones.

Our sufferings were now so great, that death was truly desirable, though our minds were, by the great mercy of

God, kept in perfect peace. One of the sailors attempted to get on shore with a plank; but as soon as he set off, the plank gave way, and he was drowned. The last remaining sailor appeared almost dead when he was washed away.—Night was now drawing on apace, and my dear Mr. Jones was gradually dying. I was obliged to hold him. The poor captain was almost as ill as he.

There were now but three of us left. Mr. Jones could scarcely speak distinctly. Sometimes he would say, "Let me go, for I am dying!" Sometimes he asked me, "What could be the matter with him." Every time a wave came, it washed him almost from me; he had no power to assist himself, and one at length bore him off, so that I had only hold of his coat collar. I called to the captain, "Mr. Jones is drowning! Oh, if you can help me, do! Do not let him drown, for he is dying! Raise him and let him die in my arms!" The captain turned round, and attempted to assist, but could not. He was not able even to assist in lifting his foot over the bowsprit, but said, "It is all over! I am dead almost myself. I cannot, I cannot assist you!" I then, by a last effort, got his head upon my shoulder; but how I collected strength for the exertion, I cannot tell. I continued to hold him in my arms; but frequently thought I must yield him up. Then again I thought, "Oh, if I can but save him, until death has ended his sufferings, I shall be satisfied!" He spoke after this, but I could not answer him for weeping, and I now felt as though my heart would break. Mr. Jones then gave a struggle, and cried aloud, "Come, Lord Jesus!" This he repeated three times, and then exclaimed, "Glory!" I held him several minutes; but he neither moved nor spoke afterwards. I spoke to him, and begged him, if still alive, to move his hand; but life had fled.

I well remember feeling thankful, amidst all my sorrow, that I had been enabled so to help him, as to keep him from drowning, and that he had not to struggle with death in the

water. I had also the full assurance of his being admitted into heaven. This was to me an indescribable consolation. Though exhausted, I could not yield him to the waves: my heart seemed to say, "Stop awhile before I let him go;" but a wave at length washed him away, and he floated at my feet.* The captain, to whom I called, was not able to speak, or even to stir, being then almost dead. My feelings now quite overwhelmed me. The last thing I remember, was my saying, "Farewell, I shall soon be with you."

I know not how much longer I continued, as I remained quite insensible; but it could not have been long before I was rescued by Mr. Kentish and Mr. Ashford, who came to my assistance. They have since told me how much they were surprized to see me sitting and not holding myself, my face resting on my hand, looking on the water, with my eyes fixed: Nor did I move, though a great noise was made with the boats and sailors. The first gentleman that touched me, says I asked him what he wanted? He said he was come to my assistance. I then asked for water, and said, "Bring Mr. Jones! he is there!" Meaning the place upon which my eyes had been fixed. They asked me my name, and they say that I told them, "Mrs. Jones of Parham." They conveyed me, with great care, from the wreck into the boat, and gave me some cordials; but I can recollect nothing except my importunity in urging them to bring Mr. Jones to me. I pointed out a body to them, which had been for some time previously near my feet, and was not then cold: but it proved to be the body of the captain, which was taken on shore and received Christain interment. By the time we arrived at the beach I was nearly dead: my pulse had almost ceased its beating, and all consciousness had completely fled.

In this exhausted and nearly inanimate condition I was landed. An immense crowd of persons waited on the beach

* See plate 16, second engraving.

to receive and welcome all the survivors. It was well for me, that I was unconscious of their congratulations being lavished upon one solitary being. Many of the spectators inquired who I was; and one of our friends, who did not know me, has since told me that I was a frightful object to behold, on account of the distortion of my features.

I was carried to the house of Joshua Kentish, Esqr., with very little hopes of recovery. But to the unwearied attention and perseverance of Dr. Peddie, with Mr. and Mrs. Kentish's kind care, I have under God to attribute my spared life. Never shall I, as long as memory continues, forget their kindness, and that of many others.

When I think of the scenes I passed through, I wonder that I could sustain them; but I owe all to the grace of God, who brought me down to the grave, and has raised me up. It is mine to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, and that of the missionaries and their wives, with whom I had rejoiced and sorrowed.

On the Sunday after my deliverance, when my reason had perfectly returned, for a few minutes the agitation of my thoughts and feelings was such, that but for the special help of God I must have sunk under it. I then indeed felt that I was left alone; yet my mercies abounded: the Lord had provided a house for my reception, and opened the generous hearts of those who rescued me, to show me the greatest kindness. In their house I was treated as one of the family, with every possible attention, till the morning I left the island. The Lord reward them!

In the most trying seasons of affliction and distress, I have never repented leaving the comforts of my native land: and the cause for which I left it will be ever dear to my heart.

May 1, 1828.—The General Conference was in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. There were 176 delegates to this conference.

Letter from a member of the General Conference, dated Pittsburg, May 22, 1829.

To day the election for book agents resulted in the re-election of Dr. John Emory for editor and general book steward, the Rev. Beverly Waugh, for assistant editor and book steward, the Rev. Charles Holliday, agent at Cincinnati, and Dr. N. Bangs for editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal. The Rev. Wm. Capers is elected our representative to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

Though the conference has had to decide on some very important and delicate points, much harmony has prevailed, and there is a prospect that the close of the session will be in much peace and good will. The 24th inst. is appointed for the adjournment of the conference, and its next meeting is to be in the city of Philadelphia, May 1, 1832.

The people of Pittsburg have done themselves much credit by the kind and hospitable manner with which they have entertained the members of the conference. Much fear was indulged before coming to the place, that accommodations could not be had for so many men; but we have been hapily disappointed, and shall carry with us a pleasing recollection of the urbanity and Christian courtesy exhibited by our friends in this city.

Extract of another letter from a member of the General Convention.—"The Canada Conference is disconnected with the United States, but no superintendent is elected, nor will there be at this conference."

All the bishops, viz. M'Kendree, George, Roberts, Soule, and Hedding, were present at this conference. But one of them has since been taken from his labors to his everlasting reward.

Enoch George, late Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was born in the state of Virginia, Lancaster county, in the year 1767 or '68. His mother died when he was young, and he was left to the care of an elder sister. Dur-

BISHOP GEORGE
engaged in prayer at the time of his conversion
See page 437

PETER JONES
an Indian chief preaching to his countrymen

ing his minority, his father removed to the state of North Carolina. At about the age of eighteen or nineteen, he became, through the instrumentality of the Methodist ministry, deeply convinced of sin. In this disconsolate state he wandered from meeting to meeting and from valley to valley, "seeking rest, finding none," and almost ready to yield to despair, yet resolved never to renounce his hope of mercy, while it was written, "The Lord will provide," and "His mercy endureth for ever." On one sabbath, while thus "tossed with tempests, and not comforted," after meeting he retired to the woods,* "and there he received forgiveness of sins, by faith that is in Christ Jesus," and the witness of the Holy Spirit with his. Then he tasted that the Lord is gracious; felt grace in his heart,—God in man,—heaven upon earth. He says, "I was in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and all around me, each shrub, each flower, each leaf, spoke the praises of the Father, who 'made them all.' From that day until now, I have never doubted my conversion to Christ, and adoption into his family. Shortly after my conversion, I joined the Methodist society, 'choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin,'—and resolved through the grace of God, to be 'faithful unto death,' and never to dishonor the cause, the ministers, the friends of Jesus, nor myself, by *falling away.*

He was soon called to the exercise of public prayer and exhortation; and after fruitless struggles to suppress the impression of duty, which increasingly rested upon his mind, with great diffidence he entered the field of labor as a preacher. He traveled a short time with Philip Cox, and was then sent, by Bishop Asbury, to assist Daniel Asbury in forming a circuit, on the head Waters of the Catawba and Broad rivers.

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* See Plate 14, p. 416.

In 1790, he was received into the itinerant connection on trial, and appointed to Pamlico circuit; and in 1791, to Caswell. In 1792 he was admitted into full connection, ordained deacon, and appointed to Guilford circuit; and in 1793, to Broad River. In 1794 he was ordained elder, and appointed to Great Pee Dee. The next year he was appointed to Edisto, with instructions to labor three months in Charleston, S. C.; and the two years following he filled the office of presiding elder.

In 1798, on account of ill health, he traveled to the north as far as New York. Having measurably recovered his health, in 1800 he resumed his labors, and was appointed presiding elder of Potomac district, in the Baltimore Conference. His health failed a second time, and he located in 1801. In 1803, he again entered the itinerant field and was appointed to Frederick circuit; in 1804, to Baltimore district; 1805, Alexandria district; 1807, Georgetown, D. C.; 1808, Frederick; 1809, Montgomery; 1810, Baltimore circuit; 1811, Potomac district; and in 1815, to Georgetown district.

At the general conference held in Baltimore, May, 1816, he was elected and ordained Bishop. In the active discharge of the arduous duties of this highly responsible office, he continued until his death. He died at Staunton, Va., August 23d, 1828, in the peace and triumph of gospel faith, and with his latest breath giving "glory to God."

Bishop George was a man of deep piety, of great simplicity of manners, a very pathetic, powerful, and successful preacher, greatly beloved in life, and very extensively lamented in death.

This brief memoir had been prepared at the instance of committees appointed for the purpose by the Baltimore and New York Annual conferences, and is inserted at their request. A fuller biographical notice of this late excellent servant of God, will appear in the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly review.

By the blessing of God, for some years past, the work of reformation has become more general in our regular stations and circuits, and also in our missionary stations, the missionary labors, in some places, among the red men, have been crowned with uncommon, if not unparalleled success. Thousands have been annually added to the church.

Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The eleventh anniversary of this society was held in the John-st. church, in the city of New York, on Monday evening, May 10th, 1830.

The Rev. Dr. Hedding, presiding bishop of the annual conference, took the chair at seven o'clock,—prayer by the Rev. Daniel Ostrander, presiding elder of the New York district, and one of the vice-presidents of the Society.

A letter was then read by brother F. Hall, clerk, from Rev. Wm. M'Kendree, senior bishop, apologizing for the disappointment felt on account of his absence; and another from his honor Judge M'Lean, explaining the reasons which prevented his attendance as one of the speakers on the occasion. An interesting communication was also read from *Rev. Francis Owen*, superintendent of the *Cherokee* mission, containing an apology for his non-attendance with the native preachers as invited, and presenting much important information relative to the removal of the southern Indians.

The annual report was then read by the Rev. Dr. Bangs, treasurer of the society. It appears from the report that the whole number of missionaries in the U. States and territories is 38, and the number of church members 6,126. The missions under the control of the Canada conference are in a most flourishing state; the number of persons under religious instruction is estimated at 1,800, pious Indians 1,100, schools 16, number of children 420. About one fourth part of the children are able to read in the Testament, nearly as

many are writing, &c. The receipts of the last year amounted to $13,128 63; expenditures, $10,544 88.

Methodist Missions.

The "missionary notices" contained in the September number of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine are highly interesting. They give the most encouraging intelligence from the missions in Ceylon, the South Seas, S. Africa, Western Africa, the West Indies, the British American colonies, and Ireland. The journals of the missionaries are of an interesting character.

South Sea Missions.—The information recently received from the Tonga Islands, is of the most cheering and gratifying nature. The opposition formerly experienced seems to be rapidly dying away; and a desire for instruction is becoming more general. In some instances the natives have already established daily devotional services; and Jehovah is supplicated as the only true God. Requests for missionaries and teachers have been earnestly pressed from the chiefs of several islands; and the chief of the Hapai islands is said to have taken a solemn oath that if teachers are sent, he will utterly forsake idolatry, and worship Jehovah only The schools, also, which have been established, are improving; and as the missionaries become more able to declare to them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God, the people become more attentive to the truths delivered to them, and more desirous of being influenced by them. "The isles shall" yet "wait for his law," and "his dominion shall be from sea to sea."

Southern Africa.—The calls for assistance continue to be importunate from almost every part of Southern Africa; and if additional missionaries could be sent out to different stations, there is every probability that a great and extensive diffuson of sacred light and influence would rapidly fol-

low. The Lord has opened wide the door; and it is the duty and privilege of our favored nation to enter in and take possession of the land, and afford instruction to a peoole so eminently prepared of the Lord.

Barbados, (*W. Indies.*)—It is with peculiar pleasure, and with sincere gratitude to the great head of the church, that we announce the completion of the new chapel at Barbados. The destruction of the former place of worship by an infuriate and lawless mob, and the barbarous treatment by which the excellent Shrewsbury was driven from the island, will be fresh in the recollection of our friends. We pity the deluded and unhappy men who could so far forget every social and Christian obligation, as to destroy a building dedicated to the worship of God, and to treat with cruel barbarism a devoted and amiable minister of the gospel; and whilst we lament their infatuation, and the infamy with which they have stamped their character, we most sincerely pray that their hearts may be changed, and their sin forgiven, by that great and holy Being whose laws they have contemned, and whose sanctuary they have overturned. We, however, rejoice that, by an omnipotent and gracious Providence, evil has been overruled for good; a larger and more commodious chapel has been erected, with every appearance of increased congregations and extending usefulness; and new and widening spheres of Christian benevolence are presenting themselves to missionary effort on this important station.

Wesleyan Methodists.

The number of church members under the care of the British and Irish conferences, according to their "Minutes," just received, Oct. 30th, 1829, is - -	310,035
Itinerant preachers stationed on circuits, missionaries, and supernumerary and superannuated preachers, -	1,159
To these add those in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in America, according to the minutes for 1829:—	
Church members, -	117,713
Itinerant preachers stationed on circuits, missionaries, and supernumerary and superannuated preachers, - -	1,817
Total number of Wesleyan Methodists throughout the world, - - -	760,754

In the 165th number of our paper* we noticed the receipt of the *Minutes of the Eighty-sixth Annual Conference of the English Wesleyan Methodists.* From this interesting document we learn that 44 preachers were admitted into full connection with the conference. Of those who remain on trial, 44 have traveled three years, 37 two years, and 40 one year. The number received on trial is 30. The number of preachers who died during the year is 23, of whom 11 were stationed in Great Britain, 2 in Ireland, and 7 in the foreign missions. There are in England 812 traveling preachers; in Ireland, 142; in the foreign mission stations, 175—total number, 1159. The number of members in Great Britain is reported at 247,529, showing an increase during the last year of, 2,335. The number in Ireland is

* Christian Advocate.

22,846, being an increase of 86 members, the number of persons under the care of the foreign missions is set down at 39,660, as follows :—in France, and at Malta, Gibralter, and Zante, 194; in continental India, and Ceylon, 967; New South Wales, Tongatabo, and Van Dieman's Land, 164; Africa, 767; in Newfoundland, and British North America, 5,494; West Indies, 32,074. Of those in the West Indies 1,079 are whites, 6,910 free blacks, and 24,085 slaves.

It appears from these statements, that the increase in England, in 1829, was 1,335; and in Ameica, it was 29,305: allowing the same increase for 1830, the number of Wesleyan Methodists throughout the world, at this time, 1830, is 792,392. More than three quarters of a million. We may truly say, *what hath God wrought.* In 1739, 91 years ago, the first Methodist society, strictly speaking, was formed in England, the number in this society was eight or ten. There are now in the British and Irish conferences, 310,035.

The first Methodist society in America was formed in the city of New York, in the year 1766, sixty four years ago, by a few emigrants from Ireland. According to the minutes, of 1829, the number in society was 447,743. Has any thing equaled this, since the days of the Apostles? Is not the hand of God in this work? does not the mercy of God, and His superintending Providence accompany and direct it? We verily believe this is God's work, and His merciful and gracious doings among the children of men, through the instrumentality of *Methodism*, (Gospel salvation,) and Methodists, and particularly the itinerant system of preaching the gospel of our *Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.* We say, *with Mr. Wesley, how has this mustard seed grown.* And with the sweet singer of Israel, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* The work is the Lord's to Him be all the Glory.

APPENDIX.

A.

John Nelson,

Very properly ranks among the first Methodist preachers. He was a native of Birstal, near Leeds, and was born in the year 1707. Very early in life he was under serious concern for the salvation of his soul. In general he acted according to the light he had, and was still wishing, and endeavoring to learn the ways of the Lord more perfectly. His business led him to reside some years in London. Here he went about seeking rest and finding none. He went from one place of worship to another, and at last, he had an opportunity of hearing Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley. His mind gradually expanded, till he was made wise unto salvation. In the memoirs of his life, written by himself, he gives an account of his hearing Mr. Wesley the first time, which was out of doors, in Moorfields. He says, "As soon as he got upon his stand, he stroked back his hair, and turned his face towards where I stood, and I thought fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me." Soon after this, Mr. Nelson was made a partaker of that peace of God that passeth all understanding. Among many oppositions and difficulties, he continued to cleave to the Lord, and to walk in his fear, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost

But after some time, it was impressed upon his mind that he must return to his native place. I shall insert his own account of this affair. He says, "About ten days before Christmas, I went to St. Paul's, and while I was at the communion-table, I felt such an awful sense of God resting upon me, that my heart was like melting wax before him, and all my prayer was, 'Thy will be done; thy will be done.' I was so dissolved into tears of love, that I could scarce take the bread; and after I had received it, it was impressed upon my mind, I must go into Yorkshire directly." Accordingly, believing it to be the will of God, he packed up his clothes, and set out; he found much of the Lord's presence on the road; but had no more thoughts of preaching than of eating fire.

Mr. Ingham had preached in the neighborhood of Birstal, being then connected with the Moravians, and the doctrine of the new birth had caused much talk in those parts. John Nelson's acquaintance asked him what he thought of this doctrine. He told them that this *new faith*, as they termed it, was the old faith of the gospel; and he related to them his own experience. This was soon noised abroad, and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things: some put him upon proving these great truths; and thus he was brought unawares, to quote, explain, compare, and enforce several parts of the scriptures. This he did at first sitting in his house, till the company increased so, that the house could not contain them. He then stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do every evening as soon as he came from work. And this may give the reader an idea of the way and manner in which many of the Methodist preachers have been called to the work of preaching the gospel. For some time, Mr. Nelson's friends, and his nearest relatives opposed him, and were ashamed of him; but he was steadfast and immovable, and abounded in the work of the Lord. His success was very great in and about

Birstal. Sinners were daily converted. Almost every night he went out of town, often four or five miles, after he had done his work, which was that of a mason; and commonly returned the same night in all sorts of weather.

The Christmas following, Mr. Nelson was invited by William Shent to go and preach at Leeds. But the attempt was considered so hazardous, that he and the society about Birstal, kept a day of fasting and prayer, before he went. As he went over the bridge, he met two men, who said to him, "If you attempt to preach in Leeds, you must not expect to come out again alive; for there is a company of men that swear they will kill you." He answered, "they must first ask my Father's leave; for if he have any more work for me to do, all the men in the town cannot kill me till I have done it." He preached to a large congregation, which behaved well, and received the word with meekness.

After this he made an excursion into Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Lincolnshire, preaching with great success, though accompanied with opposition and persecution. Mr. Wesley sent for him up to London. But by this time he had nearly worn out his clothes, and did not know where the next should come from. His wife said, he was not fit to go any where as he was. He answered, "I have worn them out in the Lord's work, and he will not let me want long." And two days after, a neighboring tradesman, that did not belong to the society, came to his house, and brought him a piece of blue cloth for a coat, and a piece of black cloth for a waistcoat and breeches. When he had got ready, he set out for London on foot, but one of his neighbors was going on horseback, who took his place, and sometimes let him ride. He preached at Nottingham-cross in the way. After spending a little time in London, he set out for Oxford, and after preaching there, and at several other places, he reached Bath, and then Bristol. After a short stay there, he set out for Cornwall. One day, after traveling twenty

miles without baiting, he and Mr. Downs, who traveled with him, came to a village, and inquired for an inn. But they were told there was none in the place, nor any on the road within twelve Cornish miles. Mr. Nelson said, "Come, brother Downs, we must live by faith." But they ventured to go to a house, and ask for something. The woman of the house said, "We have bread, butter, and milk, and good hay for your horse;" for they had one horse between them. When they reached St. Ives, Mr. Nelson worked at his business for several days. After this he went and preached at St. Just, the Land's-End, and sundry other places. On his return from Cornwall, he was benighted on the Twelve-mile-common, and was wet to the skin; but by the providence of God, he came to the house where he had called in going down. He knocked at the door, and the woman knew his voice, and said, "The Lord bless you! come in." They pulled off his wet clothes, put on dry ones, got him something warm for supper, and took his wet clothes out of his bags, which they rinsed, dried, and ironed. He sang a hymn, prayed, and gave them an exhortation that night. The next morning the man of the house alarmed that and another village, so that by seven o'clock he had about three hundred to preach to, who all seemed to receive the word with joy. He was soon after informed, that the man and his wife, who received him, had received the Lord that sent him.

After preaching at many places in the way, he got home, and found his wife much better than she had been, though never likely to recover her former strength; owing to a persecution she met with at Wakefield, when Mr. Larwood was mobbed there. After they had abused him, she with some other women, set out for Birstal; a mob followed them into the fields; when they overtook them, she turned about and spake to them, upon which all the men returned without touching them; but the women followed them till

they came to a gate, where they stopped them; they damned her, saying, "You are Nelson's wife, and here you shall die." They saw she was big with child, yet beat her on the body so cruelly, that they killed the child, and she went home and miscarried immediately.

Having occasionally wrought at his business, and sometimes traveled into different parts to preach the gospel, after preaching at Adwalton, a few miles from Leeds, Joseph Gibson, the constable's deputy, an alehouse-keeper, who found his craft was in danger, pressed him for a soldier. Mr. Nelson asked him by whose order this was done. He said, "Several of the inhabitants of the town, who did not like so much preaching." And by his talk, it appeared, they were they of his own craft, and the clergyman, who had agreed together. They took him to a public house. Mr. Charlesworth offered £500 bail for him till the next day. But no bail would be taken. He was removed the next day to Halifax. When he was brought before the commissioners, they smiled one at another, as soon as they saw him. They told the door-keepers not to let any man come in; but Mr. Thomas Brooks had got in with him: and they said, "That is one of his converts." They asked the constable's deputy what he had against him? he answered, 'I have nothing to say against him, but that he preaches to the people; and some of our townsmen don't like so much preaching." They broke out in laughter, and one of them swore he was fit to go for a soldier, for there he might have preaching enough. Mr. Nelson said, "Sir, you ought not to swear." "Well," said the commissioners, "you have no license to preach, and you shall go for a soldier." He answered, "I have as much right to preach as you have to swear." One said to the captain, "Captain, is he fit for you?" He answered, yes: "Then take him away." They refused to hear several of his neighbors, who were ready to speak to his character. The minister of Birstal, who was

one of the commissioners, displayed very great enmity against him, and did all he could to injure him and his friends in the esteem of the other commissioners. The papers sent on his behalf were not suffered to be put on the file, lest if they should be called for, they should make against them.

From York they were marched northward through Easingwold, Northallerton, Darlington, and Durham to Sunderland. The people crowded to see him in his journey, and he embraced every opportunity of instructing them in the truths of the gospel. God wonderfully supported him in his trials; and Mr. Wesley contrived to see him at Durham. He exhorted him to watch and pray, and told him, he did not doubt but his captivity would turn to the glory of God, and the furtherance of the gospel. "Brother Nelson," said he, "lose no time; speak and spare not, for God has work for you to do in every place where your lot is cast: and when you have fulfilled his good pleasure, he will break your bonds in sunder, and we shall rejoice together." They then prayed, and commended each other to the grace of God. The day following he was marched to Sunderland. Here he met with sundry comforts and encouragements, and some trials and persecutions. An officer who thought well of him, procured him a furlough to Newcastle for a week: and shortly after he received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, informing him that the Earl of Sunderland had assured Lady Huntingdon, that he should be set at liberty in a few days. He was discharged accordingly. One of the officers bore testimony, that he had done much good among them: for that they had not one-third the cursing and swearing among them which they had before he came.

He returned home to his wife, children, and friends, at Birstal. After some time he went to York; and found that the seed sown in his captivity had sprung up; for nineteen had found peace with God, and twice as many were under

convictions, though they had no one to instruct them in his absence, but the little books he had left them.

B.

From camp we removed to our winter quarters at Bruges. Here we had a lively Society; but our preaching room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship of our army, commonly called the English Church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer. I went to his house, and begged leave to speak to him. He told me, if I had business with him I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him I had the liberty of speaking to the duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted? I said, "Please your honor, I come to beg a great favor; that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the *wrath to come*." He was very angry, and told me, I should not preach, or pray any where but in the barracks. He asked, "But how came *you* to preach?" I said, "The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow sinners to repentance." He said, "Then you must restrain that Spirit." I told him "I would die first." He said, "You are in *my* hand," and turned away in a great rage.

I cried to the Lord for more *faith*, that I might never deny him, whatsoever I was called to suffer; but might own him before men and devils: and very soon after God removed this hindrance out of the way: general Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and general Ponsonby took his place. I went to his house, and was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, "I come to beg your honor will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God." He asked, "what religion are you of?" I answered, "of the church of England." Then said he, "you shall have it."

I went to the clerk for the keys; but he said, "the chaplains forbade it, and I should not have them." The general then gave me an order under his hand. So they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town, "Preaching every day at two o'clock, in the English church." And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townsfolk.

We had some good singers amongst us, and one in particular, who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear his word. One sabbath the clerk gave out a psalm. It was sung in a hymn tune; and sung so well, that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed, to go all together to church every Sabbath. On the next Sabbath we began. And when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers singing together, with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such life to the ordinance, that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

The spring following, we took the field again; and on May 11, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith, at Fontenoy. Some days before, one of our brethren standing at his tent door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand; and when he went into the battle declared, "I am going to rest in the bosom of Jesus." Indeed this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them his mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight, as made the officers as well as soldiers amazed. When wounded, some cried out, "I am going to my beloved."—Others, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." And many that were not wounded earnestly desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. When W Clements had his arm broke by a musket ball, they would have carried

him out of the battle. But he said, "No: I have an arm left to hold my sword: I will not go yet." When a second shot broke his other arm, he said, "I am as happy as I can be out of paradise." John Evans having both his legs taken off by a cannon-ball, was laid across a cannon to die; where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God and blessing him with joyful lips.

For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for above seven hours. But I told my comrades, "The French have no ball made that will kill me this day." After about seven hours, a cannon ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, "Haime! where is your God now?" I answered, "Sir, he is here with me; and he will bring me out of this battle." Presently a cannon ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, "Haime is gone!" But I replied, "He is not gone yet." I soon disengaged myself, and walked on, praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse; but that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way, multitudes lay bleeding, groaning, dying, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace; but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me. I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field, I met one of our brethren, with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled and said, "brother Haime, I have got a sore wound." I asked, "Have you got Christ in your heart?" He said, "I have; and have had him all this day." I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of the power of God. But I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all his mercies!" Among the dead there was great plenty of watches, and of gold and silver. One asked me, will not

you get something? I answered, "No, I have got Christ. I will have no plunder."

C.

Mr. Wesley says, when preaching to these colliers, the tears flowed so freely and plentifully, that they washed the smut from their sooty faces.

D.

The following story is told, on which the engraving plate 7th is founded. A certain man in Ireland persecuted the Methodists, and sometimes beat the preachers when they passed his place. A stout healthy preacher volunteered to take the circuit on which this persecutor lived. When the preacher came by the persecutor's, he took a club with him. The persecutor met him, and said, how dare you come on my ground, have you not been informed that I beat all the Methodist preachers who come here? Preacher. Yes, I have been so informed; but thought I would do the beating this time, (presenting his club.) The persecutor called his servant, and said, take this man's horse and take good care of him: to the preacher he said, come in Sir, come in. Where do you preach to night? three miles from here, said the preacher; I think I will go, said the man; he did; the word of truth reached his heart: the next time his wife accompanied him; they were both awakened and converted, and joined society, and their house became a home for the preachers.

E.

Mr. Fletcher was an Israelite indeed, a holy man, deeply experienced in the things of God, humble and happy and exemplary in all his deportment; his life was a practical comment on those texts which speak of the great faith, and exceeding joy, which Christians may exercise, and receive through our Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps few, if any, were

as fervent in secret devotion: It is said that he stained the wall of his study, with his breath, by frequent and fervent secret prayer. In the plate he is represented, in his study, at this holy and soul-refreshing duty.

F.

In submitting to the drudgery of charity, he suffered no opportunity to escape his notice that could furnish him with the most distant prospect of pecuniary aid for the missions. And although he occasionally met with treatment which did not correspond with the politeness of his address, yet at other times his applications were successful, where his friends had anticipated nothing but repulsive insult. A singular incident of this description occurred only a few years since at Stonehouse, near Plymouth.

Calling one day on the captain of a man of war, who resided there, he introduced the case of the negroes in such an affecting manner, as to prevail upon him to give him a sum much larger than he expected. This he gratefully received and retired. The captain, who knew nothing of Dr. Coke, happened, in the course of the day, to call on a gentleman who had long resided in the place, and to whom Dr. Coke had frequently made successful applications. After conversing together for some time—"Pray Sir," said the captain, "do you know any thing of a little fellow who calls himself Dr. Coke, and who is going about begging money for missionaries to be sent among the slaves? "I know him well," was the reply. "He seems," rejoined the captain, "to be a heavenly-minded little devil. He coaxed me out of two guineas this morning."

It was a favorite maxim with Dr. Coke, as well as with Sir Robert Walpole, that every man might be purchased, if the person intending to buy him could find his price. Whether this be a libel on human nature, as some have contended, forms no part of the present inquiry; but it is certain, that

Dr. Coke, in adopting it, was far from being singular. One day, having advanced this position before a crowded congregation, he was requested, on the conclusion of the service, by some persons present, who belonged to a town about six miles distant, to visit their place and preach. His route being fixed in his own mind, and this town not lying in his way, he refused to comply with their request. Being unwilling to abandon their object from a solitary repulse, they consulted together, to contrive how they should proceed in their second attack, so as to ensure success. In this consultation it was observed by one, "The doctor told us in his sermon, that every man was to be purchased, if the buyer could find his price. Let us tell him, that if he will come we will hold ourselves responsible for a good collection for the missions. Perhaps this may purchase him." His friends assenting to his proposition, agreed to make the attempt, and the writer of this anecdote was delegated by them to introduce their contrivance to Dr. Coke. On hearing the manner in which they had applied his own principle to himself, he could not but smile. He paused for a few moments, and then with joy sparkling in his eyes exclaimed, "They have hit upon it most effectually. This is exactly my price; and I will endeavor to go to morrow." He went accordingly, and was so well pleased with the collection, that in most of his future visits, Mevagissey, in Cornwall, was included in his route.

G.

His travels were incessant, and almost unparalleled. Without the greatest punctuality and care in the management of his time, he could not have gone through his abundant and diversified labors. But he had stated hours for every purpose, and he did not suffer one thing to interfere with another. Between nine and ten o'clock he regularly retired to rest, and rose soon after four in the morning: and no business, company, or conversion, could induce him to depart

from his rules of conduct. He wrote, traveled, visited the sick, and did every thing else in hours appointed, which hours were inviolable. To ascertain the precise measure of Mr. Wesley's labors, would be an impossible task. His public ministrations were but a part of them. But from these, we may form some conception of the rest. For more than fifty years successively, he generally preached twice every day, and not unfrequently four or five times. To these may be added numberless exhortations addressed to the societies after preaching, with various other employments. The lowest calculation we can make of his travels will be four thousand miles annually, which in fifty-two years, will make two hundred and eighty thousand miles. And at the lowest computation in these fifty-two years, from 1739 to 1791, he could not preach fewer than forty thousand, four hundred and sixty sermons. He read a great deal as he traveled. Even when he traveled on horse-back, which he did till he was very old, he would travel forty, fifty, or sixty miles a day with a book in his hand.

To look at him he was a very slow writer. Yet, by constant, unwearied, and persevering application, what numbers of volumes did he publish! In addition to these publications, perhaps he wrote a greater number of letters to the preachers, various members of the societies, and other persons, than were ever written by any man in the world.

The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. In person, he was rather below the middle size, but remarkably well proportioned. He had a good constitution, and seemed not to have the smallest quantity of superfluous flesh. In every period of his life, his habit of body was the reverse of corpulent, and was expressive of the strictest temperance, and constant exercise. He was muscular and strong, till a very few years before his death; had a firm step, and was a remarkably good walker. His face was remarkably fine even to old age; and the freshness of his complexion continued to

the last week of his life: his whole countenance was remarkably expressive; few saw him without being struck with his appearance; and numbers, who had been greatly prejudiced against him, have conceived sentiments of esteem and veneration for him, as soon as they have been introduced into his presence. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest that ever was seen: he had a clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, and an eye as bright and piercing as can be imagined. In his countenance and behavior, there was an admirable mixture of cheerfulness and gravity.

In dress, he was a pattern of plainness and neatness. His coat was without a cape, and with a small upright collar: he wore a narrow plaited stock about his neck, and no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel. And not only in his person and dress, but in every thing he was a model of neatness. In his chamber and study, during the winter months, when he resided in London, his books, his papers, and every thing belonging to him, were in the most perfect order. He seemed to be always at home: and yet was always ready to start upon the longest journey.

H.

Richmond Nolley.

The author of these remarks accompanied him over the Mississippi, and through a vast swamp: the difficulties we had to encounter were almost incredible.—On the 24th of November we parted: the weather was wet and cold: that day he reached the place he designed, and stayed with a friendly family. The weather still disagreeable. He started and went a circuitous way to avoid a bad swamp, and some deep creeks. There was no white person living on the path: in the evening he came to a village of Indians. He was to pass a creek, and was apprehensive it would be full; he employed an Indian to go with him: when he arrived it was as he expected. There was no other alternative but to cross or stay with the savages: so he left his var-

lice, saddle-bags, and a parcel of books, and attempted to ride the stream; the current was rapid, and beat him and his horse down; the banks were steep, so that his horse could not get out. In the struggle he and his horse parted; he got hold of a bush and pulled himself out—his horse swam back to shore from whence they started. He then direct the Indian to keep his horse until morning, and he would walk on to the first house, about two miles. He had gotten about a mile on the way, when the wet and cold combined stopped his progress, (it seems he was conscious of his approaching dissolution—he had kneeled down on the ground, for his knees were both dirty, and commended his spirit to God,) there in the woods, until death gave him an honorable discharge; there lay our beloved Richmond Nolley, on the cold ground and wet leaves, at full length; his eyes neatly closed, his left hand on his breast, his right hand a little fallen off: here his life and toil ceased together.

We have no scruples in saying, no doubt exists but he has gone to the haven of repose, to receive that reward that remains for the faithful. Hail! happy spirit, Hail! T. G.

I.

There was one remarkable instance, which I shall here mention, viz:—I dreamed that one of my neighbors had a fire broke out, and I worked at it until it became pure gold; I then told him that he was one of the richest men in the world. Soon after, I dreamed that a fire broke out and run through all his plantation, and then died away, and the whole appeared to be a coal mine. I rested on my mind what these dreams could mean. In a few weeks this neighbor was taken sick, and lay very ill with a pleurisy; his life being despaired of, he requested them to send for me to pray with him. I got out of my bed and went; when I got there, he told me that the Lord had warned him to send for me, and that all his sins had passed before him that night, and

that he expected to die and go to hell; but that he now felt his anguish and guilt removed, and his mind filled with remarkable peace. I told him his soul was converted: he suddenly clasped his hands and sprung up in the bed praising God aloud, exhorting all in the place to repent and turn to God. His words wrought so powerfully on their hearts, that a general weeping took place. That night his disorder broke, and he recovered and lived some years in the service of God: then died a happy man; but his family, who were all struck with the power of God the night of his conversion, lost their desires for salvation. Then I understood that the fire, which I had seen in my dream, was the heavenly fire which had caught in him and run through all his family; the pure gold was that treasure he retained in his own soul; the coal mine, his family, who lost their desires and were dead and barren in religion.

At another time, on Saturday night, I dreamed that the next day there would be a disappointment, and that the expected preacher would not come, and that the Lord said to me, "*You must go and preach, for you must speak for me.*" I awoke, and awaked my wife and told her my dream. She replied your are always dreaming about preaching, there is no doubt but what the preacher will be there." I said, very well, we will go and see; accordingly we went, the people gathered, but no preacher came; one of the men said we ought not to let the people go away without singing and prayer; which I thought very right, and concluded within myself to preach. A hymn was sung, and one went to prayer, but the cross was so great that my heart failed, and I did not attempt to speak. The people being dismissed, I returned home sorely distressed, that I had been so fearful as to disobey the divine impression that had attended my mind. Thus I fell into great heaviness and deadness, and wandered about the fields. At length I retired into the woods and covenanted with the Lord, that if he

would reveal himself to me again, as he had done before, I would go and preach wherever he would send me, even if it were to devils. That instant the Lord broke into my soul with power: I arose from my knees and preached to the very trees of the woods. I was resolved, through grace, the first opportunity that offered to preach to men. A few days after a neighbor died, and I was requested to attend the funeral. As I rode to the place, these words, "Circumcise your hearts, for to-morrow the Lord will do great things among you," rested weightily upon my mind. When I got to the place, I stood up and said, "The Lord hath shown us what we shall all come to, in taking this our fellow mortal from time to eternity," then went to prayer, and when I arose from my knees, I took my text and preached. The word had effect on many, and we had a weeping season. From that time I went on to preach as occasion served, from time to time, and the fruit which the Lord gave me was a satisfactory evidence that he had called me to the work of the ministry, and had committed a dispensation of the gospel unto me. Some time after this, as I was on my way to hear one of the Methodist preachers, it was strongly impressed on my mind that the preacher would not be there, and that I must preach, from a certain text which then was given me. When I got to the place, I understood that the preacher was so unwell that he could not come. One of the principal members in that church asked me to pray with the people. After prayer I arose and took my text and began to preach, at which the people were surprised, it being very unexpected to them; however it was a time of liberty and power. After meeting, a man asked me to preach at his house the next sabbath; accordingly the appointment was made, which I attended, and felt a great opening in divine things, and the people were much wrought on. It was in a neighborhood where there never had been any Methodist preaching before. The following extraordinary occurrence took place: while

I was speaking with great zeal, and exclaiming against the various abominations of the people, and pointing out their enormous sins, I cried out, "For aught I know, there may be a murderer in this congregation!" Immediately a lusty man attempted to go out, but when he got to the door he bawled out, and stretched out both his arms and run backward, as though some one had been before him pressing on him to take his life and he endeavoring to defend himself from the attack, until he got to the far side of the room, and then fell backward against the wall and lodged on a chest, and cried out very bitterly, and said, "He was the murderer, for he had killed a man about fifteen years before, and that two men met him at the door with pointed swords, and pursued him across the room to stab him!" Thus he lay and cried with great anguish of soul. This surprised me so much that I stopped preaching; the people were greatly alarmed, and looked on the man with the utmost astonishment. After a short pause, I went on again and finished my discourse. The man, who was in in this wonderful manner wrought upon, recovered himself and went away, and I never have seen or heard of him since.

But to return to my appointment. In Mannington great congregations attended. The man and his wife* were both awakened and under strong convictions, and many others were stirred up to inquire the way to Zion. At the second place, the minister thereof attended: I felt at first, a great cross to preach before him, he being a learned man, and I supposed had come to hear me with an evil design, as appeared afterwards to be the case. However, I prayed to the Lord not to let me be confounded. After I began, my cross was but light, and the minister, who sat before me, was no more than another sinner. The power of God rested upon us, and several cried out aloud, and two fell to the floor agonizing for salvation. I tarried all night, and the

* At whose house, it is probable, Mr. Abbott preached.

minister and five or six of the heads of the Presbyterian meeting spent the evening with me, in order to dispute, and pick me to pieces if possible. The minister asked me if I was a *Wesleyan:* I answered yes. Then, said he, "you deny the perseverance of the saints." God forbid, said I, for none can be saved unless they persevere to the end. Then, said he, you believe the possibility of falling from grace; I answered yes. He then, in a very abrupt manner, gave me the lie; but when I told him that I could prove the doctrine by the word of God, he very passionately gave me the lie again. I quoted sundry scriptures, particular that of David's fall, and turned to Ezek. chap. iii, ver. 20 and 21 and wished him to read and explain the passage; but he would not touch the Bible. His elder said, it read as I said, and he ought to explain it. He in a passion, said he was brought up at a college, and certainly knew; but I was a fool, and he could cut such a fellow's throat; then turned to his elder and said, "If there was a dog's head on your shoulders I would cut it off. Do not you know the articles of your own church? I will teach you better." I told him the curse of God was upon all such watchmen as he was, who did not warn the people against sin; that if they lived and died in sin they could not be saved, and by his doctrine souls might fall away and perish, but their blood would be found in his skirts. He replied, I could cut such a fellow's throat; it makes my blood boil to hear the perseverance of the saints denied. I then handed him the Bible, and desired him to clear it up; but, said he, "you are a fool, you know nothing at all. I was brought up at college, and I will have you before your betters." He got so angry that he could say but little more. I told him that if we were ambassadors for Christ, we ought to go on hand and heart to attack the devil in all his strong holds. And then asked the man of the house if I should preach there again; but the answer was no. So this place was shut against me through the influ-

ence of the minister. But glory to God, there were doors opened in Mannington, so that I was at no loss for places to preach at.

I accordingly preached at William Harvey's, where the people came out pretty generally, and the Lord wrought powerfully among them. And on my return home, I went with one of my old companions, who asked me if I would preach at his house in Woodstown, I told him I would; accordingly an appointment was made, and we had a crowded house: while I was speaking, a mob of soldiers came with their guns, and bayonets fixed, and one rushed in, while the rest surrounded the door; the people fled every way, and he presented his gun and bayonet as though he would run me through: it passed close by my ear twice. If ever I preached the terrors of the law, I did it while he was threatening me in this manner, for I felt no fear of death, and soon found he could not withstand the force of truth; he gave way and retreated to the door. They endeavored to send him back again, but in vain, for he refused to return. However, I went on and finished my discourse, and then asked the man of the house if I should preach there again: he said no, for they will pull down my house. But Doctor Harris told me I might preach in his house. In two weeks I attended at the Doctor's, and found about one hundred men under arms. When I began to preach, they grounded their arms, and heard me in a quiet orderly manner.

Next day, I went to brother S. F.'s, and preached in the evening to a crowded congregation, and God poured out his Spirit in such a manner that one fell to the floor. A captain and some soldiers came to take me up, but the Spirit of God took him up in such a manner, that he returned home crying to God for mercy. For six weeks his distress was so great that they had to watch him for fear he would make away with himself: but the Lord sent the Comforter to his soul, and filled him with joy unspeakable. I saw him some time

after, happy in God. We spent a precious time together, and parted in love. This meeting was a time of God's power, many were awakened to a sense of their danger, and the people of God were happy, and for my part I was very happy.

I went to my next appointment, and preached with power; we had a melting time. One young woman being powerfully awakened, cried out, "I see Moses and Elias," repeating it many times over. I said, See Jesus! She replied, He is coming! and clasping her arms to her body, cried several times, I have got him! I have got him! and sprung up, shouting praise to God for her soul's deliverance. I said, If you have got him, be sure to keep him close to your heart. I will, said she. There was also present a Quaker woman, the wife of a Quaker preacher's son, who resided in Pennsylvania; she had dreamed the night before, that she saw two doves, the one milk white, and the other speckled and that she must go to the place, and they would lead her to a spring as clear as crystal, and there she should drink her fill. Next morning, on the strength of her dream she took her horse and chaise, and crossed the Delaware river and came to the house, just as I was going to preach in the evening. The Lord sent the word to her heart, with such power, that she cried out, I shall be dead and damned before morning! Many prayers were sent up to God on her behalf. This meeting continued till eleven o'clock; we then retired to bed, and in the dead of night, she, and the woman of the house, came into the room where we lay, ringing her hands, crying, I shall be dead and damned before morning! desiring that we would get up and pray for her, we arose, and she related her dream. The woman of the house replied, These are the two doves. It struck me like a clap of thunder, I am the speckled one. This caused me to search my heart. I exhorted her to pray for herself; she did so, again and again, and we did the same for her; I

then exhorted her to believe on the Lord Jesus; but she still received no answer of peace to her soul. We retired to bed again, but she walked the floor the remainder of the night. I think I never saw a poor soul in deeper distress. In the morning, after prayer, I took my farewell of the family; to her, I said, I never expect to see thee any more, until I see thee in a world of spirits; but she replied, Thou wilt see me again, and asked me when I would be at home. I told her, and exhorted here to be engaged with God, and he would bless her soul. The woman of the house told me, that she intended to come to my house as soon as I got home. But in two or three days she found God precious to her soul. I saw her again about sixteen years after, and we had a precious time, in conversing together on the things of God; she could then talk Canaan's language.

Next day, I set out for my appointment, but being a stranger, I stopped at a house to inquire the way, and the man told me he was just going to that place, for there was to be a Methodist preacher there that day; and our preacher, said he, is to be there to trap him in his discourse, and if you will wait a few minutes until a neighbor of mine comes, I will go with you. In a few minutes the man came, who, it seems was a constable. So we set off, and they soon fell into conversation about the preacher, having no idea of my being the man, as I never wore black, or any kind of garb, that indicated my being a preacher, and so I rode unsuspected. The constable being a very profane man, he swore by all the gods he had, good and bad, that he would lose his right arm from his body if the Methodist preacher did not go to jail that day. This was the theme of their discourse. My mind was greatly exercised on the occasion, and what added, as it were, double weight, I was a stranger in a strange place, where I knew no one. When we arrived at the place appointed, I saw about two hundred horses hitched, I also hitched mine and retired into the woods, where I prayed and

covenanted with God on my knees, that if he stood by me in this emergency, I would be more for him through grace, than ever I had been. I then arose and went to my horse, with a perfect resignation to the will of God, whether to death or to jail. I took my saddle bags and went to the house; the man took me into a private room, and desired I would preach in favor of the war, as I was in a presbyterian settlement. I replied, I should preach as God should direct me. He appeared very uneasy and left me, and just before preaching, he came in again and renewed his request that I would preach up for war; I replied as before, and then followed him out among the people, where he made proclamation as follows :—Gentlemen, this house is my own, and no gentleman shall be interrupted in my house in time of his discourse, but after he has done you may do as you please. Thank God, said I softly, that I have liberty once more to warn sinners before I die. I then took my stand, and the house was so crowded that no one could sit down. Some hundreds were round about the door. I stood about two or three feet from the constable who had sworn so bitterly. When he saw that I was the man, that he had so abused on the way, with so many threats and oaths, his countenance fell and he turned pale. I gave out a hymn, but no one offered to sing; I sung four lines, and kneeled down and prayed. When I arose, I preached with great liberty. I felt such power from God rest upon me, that I was above the fear of either men or devils, not regarding whether death or jail should be my lot. Looking forward I saw a decent looking man trembling, and tears flowed in abundance, which I soon discovered was the case with many others. After preaching, I told them I expected they wanted to know by what authority I had come into that country to preach. I then told them my conviction and conversion, the place of my nativity and place of residence: also my call to the ministry, and that seven years I had labored in God's vine-

yard: that I spent my own money and found and wore my own cloths, and that it was the love that I had for their precious souls for whom Christ died, that had induced me to come among them at the risk of my life; and then exhorted them to fly to Jesus, the ark of safety—that all things were ready—to seek, and they should find, to knock, and it should be opened unto them. By this time the people were generally melted into tears. I then concluded, and told them on that day two weeks they might expect preaching again. I mounted my horse and set out with a friendly Quaker for a pilot. We had not rode above fifty yards, when I heard one hallooing after us. I looked back, and saw about fifty running after us. I then concluded that to jail I must go. We stopped, and when they came up, I crave your name said one,—I told him, and so we parted. He was a justice of the peace, and was the person I had taken notice of in time of preaching, and observed him to be in great anxiety of mind. No one offered me any violence; but they committed the next preacher, on that day two weeks, to the common jail. I went home with the kind Quaker, where I tarried all night. I found that himself and wife were under serious impressions, and had had Methodist preaching at their house. They were very kind, and we spent the evening in conversing on the things of God. Here A. C., one of our young preachers, met me, intending to go round the circuit with me.

We set out for the next preaching place, where we found a small congregation. I had great liberty in preaching, and we had a blessed time. One woman fell to the floor. Brother C. was greatly tried at hearing the cries of the people.

FINIS.